







# THE MARCH OF JAPAN





# THE MARCH OF JAPAN

By  
EDGAR LAJTHA

ILLUSTRATED



London  
ROBERT HALE & COMPANY  
102 Great Russell Street W.C.1

MCMXXXVI  
1936

TO MONIQUE JEAN

MADE AND PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY FURNELL AND SONS, LTD.  
PAULTON (SOMERSET) AND LONDON

# CONTENTS

## PART I

### THE ISLAND AND THE PEOPLE

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE GODS RETURN HOME . . .	11
II. THE VALET EXPRESS . . .	16
III. FLOWERS, PRIESTS AND GUNS . . .	23
IV. TOKYO, SNAPSHOTS OF A GREAT CITY	31
V. THE GEISHA BUSINESS . . .	49
VI. THE HEROINES OF YOSHIWARA . . .	57
VII. WHERE THE TRAINS DO NOT STOP . . .	67
VIII. SMOULDERING HAKODATE . . .	77
IX. EX-RULERS IN THE MONKEY CAGE . . .	83
X. THE BLEAK ISLAND OF SAKHALIN . . .	93

## PART II

### THE MUSES OF THE CONQUERORS

XI. MUSIC! . . . . .	103
XII. THE SWORD THAT RULES THE FILM . . .	109
XIII. THE HONOURED MOON . . . . .	118
XIV. THE THEATRE OF THE MOTLEY GIANTS	120
XV. THE WESTERN THEATRE IN THE JAPANESE MELTING POT . . .	135
XVI. THE GIRLS' OPERA . . . . .	139

CHAPTER		PAGE
XVII.	THE MIND BEFORE THE BODY . . .	146
XVIII.	THE WISDOM OF GREEN TEA . . .	155

### PART III

### WORKING JAPAN

XIX.	THE SECRET OF CHEAP GOODS . . .	163
XX.	IN A KIMONO STUDIO . . .	174
XXI.	THE TSUDO MINERS . . .	178
XXII.	THE LITTLE GIRLS FROM THE FACTORIES	183
XXIII.	THE INDUSTRIALISATION OF PEARLS .	189
XXIV.	THE FLOATING FACTORIES . . .	205
XXV.	THE FOOD LABORATORIES . . .	211

### PART IV

### THE MARCH ON ASIA

XXVI.	THE WAY TO UTOPIA . . .	225
XXVII.	PORTRAIT OF AN EMBRYO TOWN .	235
XXVIII.	JAPANESE COMMAND—CHINESE OBEY .	239
XXIX.	PARADISE OF ALL PEOPLES? . . .	243
XXX.	HOTEL YAMATO, HSENGKING . . .	246
XXXI.	COMEDY AND REALITY . . .	250

### PART V

### THE SPIRIT

XXXII.	THE LESSON OF THE VOLCANOES .	263
XXXIII.	THE LIVING GOD . . .	273
XXXIV.	THE OFFICERS' DREAM . . .	278

# ILLUSTRATIONS

	FACE PAGE
H. I. M. HIROHITO . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
FARMER IN RICE FIELD . . . . .	16
MOUNT FUJI . . . . .	17
TOKYO . . . . .	32
GINZA GIRLS, TOKYO . . . . .	33
WHILE RESTING—ASIATIC: WHILE WORKING—	
EUROPEAN . . . . .	48
GEISHA GIRLS . . . . .	49
SCHOOL IS STARTED EVERY DAY BY OBEISANCE TO THE EMPEROR'S ENSHRINED PORTRAIT . . .	64
FARMER'S FAMILY . . . . .	65
AINU WOMAN . . . . .	80
MACHINE GUNNER . . . . .	81
"GIRL IN WHITE" BY DAISAVURO NAKAMURA . .	118
1 ACTRESS AS MAN . . . . .	119
2 ACTOR AS WOMAN . . . . .	119
3 MISS FUKUKO SAYO (PRIVATE) . . . . .	119
4 MISS FUKUKO SAYO (STAGE). . . . .	119
TAKAKO IRIE—JAPANESE GARBO . . . . .	128
KIKUGORO AS YASUNA . . . . .	128
1 KIKUGORO ON THE HANAMICHI . . . . .	129
2 MUSICAL COMEDY . . . . .	129
GIRLS' OPERA . . . . .	144
TEA CEREMONIAL . . . . .	145
1 THE AUTHOR AND YOUNGSTERS . . . . .	168
2 JAPANESE GOODS IN MANCHURIA . . . . .	168
1 DINNER HOUR IN THE MINE . . . . .	169
2 MINERS' SPORTS . . . . .	169

	FACE PAGE
FACTORY GIRLS MARCHING TO WORK . . . . .	184
COTTON MILL'S DORMITORY . . . . .	185
DR. SAIKI . . . . .	216
PEARL KING MIKIMOTO . . . . .	217
MANCHURIA ON THE EVE . . . . .	232
1 FINANCE DEPARTMENT, HSINKING, MANCHURIA . . . . .	233
2 CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION BUREAU, HSINKING . . . . .	233
LAMP-POSTS BUT NO HOUSES (HSINKING) . . . . .	240
MAGIC SOYA BEANS . . . . .	241
YOUNG OFFICERS IN SPORTS KIT . . . . .	256
YOUNG OFFICERS IN FENCING KIT . . . . .	257
CLIMBING AN IMITATION FORTRESS . . . . .	268
SPRING IN OSAKA . . . . .	269

**PART I**  
**THE ISLAND AND THE PEOPLE**



## AUTHOR'S NOTE

Modern Japan is a world that is old and yet also new. The Japanese know us considerably better than we know them and they may reap the benefit of this knowledge in the future. "The March of Japan" is not meant as a judgment of the country; it is for the greatest part the personal impression of one who knew just as little about the country before he set out as those for whom the book is intended.

E. L.

## CHAPTER I

### THE GODS RETURN HOME

As soon as we reached Shanghai detectives boarded the ship inconspicuously and began at once to question the stewards. They wanted to know everything about every passenger, and only the Japanese on board were exempted. The wireless officer had plenty to do, for the Tokyo police demanded complete biographies of all foreign passengers.

The peaceful roofs of China were still flashing in the sun and the yellow sea was still shallow. The shiny brown bodies of the fisher boys glistened in the sun as they lay back in the Junks which swarmed about in hundreds at the mouth of the yellow river like a mediaeval armada.

The next port of call was Japanese, but we were already in Japanese waters. In a Japanese ship Japan begins long before Shanghai is reached. For it, the East China Sea after the Straits of Formosa is a Japanese sea, for the audacious bow of Japanese islands rises up at Formosa and stretches from there, in the tropics, northwards to the Ice Sea.

The Orient as such ends at Shanghai.

And the international tourist must adapt himself to new conditions. He stops bullying the Japanese stewards. He does not shout "Boy" any more, but calls "Boy san," or "Mr. Boy." He has to shake off as quickly as possible the colonial attitude, the domineering tone which he has used to brown faces

between Suez and Shanghai. The change becomes complete between Shanghai and Nagasaki and it is a pleasure to see how the European suddenly becomes friendly and unassuming. Everyone must learn that Nippon is no Colony.

Nagasaki was the next stop.

The Japanese passengers showed signs of suppressed nervousness. They were students, journalists or government officials who were going home, after not setting eye on their homeland for years. Now they were close at hand. And the nearer they came, the tenser their excitement grew, but even in the sun of their fatherland their faces remained inscrutable. Their lips were pursed and they betrayed no emotion. The happier they were the more controlled they became, and they grew more and more taciturn.

A little Japanese schoolmaster was always playing ping-pong with foreigners when the ship was rolling in the Indian Ocean and he told stories of his grand times in Berlin where he learned languages, but after Shanghai he neither spoke nor played, and when he was asked why he had become so silent he smiled and beating his chest with his fist he said: "Within burns the fire of patriotism, the longing for my home, the hot flame called Japanese Spirit which sets worlds on fire."

Izoutani San, the cabin steward, who was so mouselike and serious on the voyage, now smiled continuously for no apparent reason, whether he was coming or going, in company or alone. He even disclosed the cause of his mirth. . . .

"I am so happy that Japan is near. Please write to the company that I have satisfied you, then they may transfer me to an express boat running between

Kobe and Shanghai. Then I can see Japan every fourth day."

While the ship was running into Nagasaki, Okada, the grey-haired and elegant industrialist showed wonderful restraint. While he sipped cocktails he told tales of Heidelberg where his only son had studied. The boy had died there when he was twenty, only a year before, and the industrialist smiled faintly as he recounted his stories and whistled "Heidelberg, du feine" in the balmy summer night.

At last! Nagasaki, first port of the island of Kyushu, with 200,000 souls. This is the beginning of the country on which no enemy foot has trod.

Glaring electric signs lit up the dark blue sky. The great names of Japanese industry were celebrating with nocturnal orgies of light in Nagasaki. Long narrow strips of flame raced over to the horizon. Express trains! Motor lamps picked out the roads like lightning flashes.

The fully laden ship disgorged the raw stuffs which it had brought to Japan, and this cargo would in a few months' time be turned into finished products which would be picked up again and shipped back to the ports of Asia.

Nearly two dozen journalists came on board. The cotton commission which had just returned from London was photographed down in the lounge, for Nagasaki is one of the many fortified harbours where photography is prohibited. The photographs were wirelessed to Osaka and Tokyo.

Neatly dressed people streamed through the streets, clad in English-cut suits, or in kimonos, the men's grey and the women's coloured. The mixture of old and new in this transitional period gave the town

a great variety of scene and something of the old world atmosphere remained. All we foreigners felt that here, 40 days' voyage from London, a new life, a new world had begun. Here in Nagasaki modern Asia stepped confidently into the front rank of the twentieth century.

Behind the lights of Nagasaki the sacred plains of the Isle of Kyushu slept on. Night had fallen and we were gliding over the holy ground of the Japanese islands, as the night express bore us northwards.

The little schoolmaster had become more talkative than ever and he spoke enthusiastically of the mythology of his country. It was on these plains that the heavenly ancestors of the Imperial Family first appeared thousands of years ago; high above, the High-Heavenly-Plain on Takamagahara, the plain which is as high as heaven, ruled the mother of the Japanese race, the Sungoddess. She sent down her grandchild Ninigi to the islands below to found an Empire, and she gave him as a sign of his divine right, the Sword, the Mirror and the Jewel which till now have always remained in the possession of the Emperors who wear no crown.

The night express rushed on through the Land of the Gods.

The first break in the island chain is at the harbour town of Moji, on a narrow strait. We had to change into a ferry which took us across to Shimonoseki. This is the beginning of the Island of Yamato, on which Tokyo lies.

Sakura, Cherry Blossom, was the name of the new express which took us on through the countryside which resembled a well-tended garden. We flew

through a symphony of gardens of sea-green, pine-green, leaf-green and yellow-green, but the whole was neither exotic nor *oppressive*. The terraced rice-fields stood under water and the peasants' houses looked like moated castles in a landscape of rice fields. Almost every peasant was living on an island.

Every square yard of land was cultivated, for Japan needs every handful of earth. Only sixteen per cent of the island surface is cultivatable, so the Japanese save even on pathways, which are narrow even for children, and they are becoming narrower, for the Japanese are increasing and growing hungry. And the peasants had laid out another layer of fields on their roofs where they had planted pumpkins.

Suddenly the country became criss-crossed with telegraph wires, wireless masts, and electricity works, but even they blended as softly into the landscape as the people.

In the distance volcanoes spouted out flames and smoke. These belching mountains brought a dynamic touch into the scene. This lovely land trembles every week, and every generation sees the carefully planned fields shaken, burned and thrown up only to be carefully laid out in order again, as if it were all too beautiful to last.

## CHAPTER II

### THE VALET EXPRESS

THE Japanese sleeping car is like a comfortable family bedroom. As if on a word of command the passengers start to undress. There is a harmonious play of hands, silks, and colour, as the day kimonos are hung up and the women lie down in their night kimonos. Only when all the passengers, men and women, have lain down to rest does the boy draw the curtains. Then books and magazines are read and the boy glides from bed to bed hanging up the men's clothes carefully, as if it were a labour of love. His mouth is covered by a mask and he does not even breathe on the pillows and clothes.

Two European women sat in the dining car eating Japanese ice cream which has the bitter taste and green colour of tea. One of them was playing with her glass and turned it upside down and placed a small china Buddha on top of it. The head steward who was surveying the life of the dining car from a raised cash-desk, came up at once to her table, turned up the glass, cautiously replaced the figure on the window ledge, bowed once, and, without so much as a word, returned to his throne.

A young man approached at a station:

"Where are you going?"

"To Nara," I replied.

"Thanks."

He went to the station telephone and put through a call to Nara. I thought that he was one of those







ominous Japanese detectives, but he was only a male "travellers' nurse."

Okamoto san, Ibuchi san, Higuchi san, Yoshida san, Maruyama san, Fujiwara san. These guides all speak perfect English and know that the coat can sometimes make the man. They are employees of the sixty odd Japanese travel bureaus which are scattered all over the Empire. The travel agencies attach these young men to foreigners as "nurses for the journey through Japan"; there is of course no charge.

They recognise the stranger from afar on his arrival in Japan at Yokohama or Nagasaki, for it is easy enough to pick out the non-Japanese in the sea of Japanese faces, and once in the guide's charge he is passed from hand to hand as if he were breakable goods. Every station telephone is at the disposal of the guides, and Japan is mapped out in their heads, so that they are able to plan trips lasting for months. The traveller is received in every town by one of these men, who will be delighted to act as private secretary or in any other capacity, and the farther north one goes the more polite they are, until on the northernmost island their manners reach the level of comedy. And this service can be obtained at the price of a postcard advising the tourist bureau of your arrival. This expensive tourist luxury service is not altogether foreign propaganda nor Japanese good manners. It is rather pride in showing the West that in some ways Japan is more cultivated and elegant. At the next station another "B.T.I." man announced himself and I was presented with a beautiful book of the Board of Tourist Industry, "The Lure of Japan." In one section, "Some Don'ts," Nippon says what she does not want to

hear from us. Mr. Akimoto, who speaks in this leaflet for Japan, does not mince his words. With naïve forthrightness the Tourist Industry tells us on the threshold that Nippon will not adapt herself for us, but we must adapt ourselves for Nippon.

“Do not let outward appearances of modern cities in Japan deceive you as to the intrinsic character of the Japanese Empire.

“ . . . the majority of Japanese are still obliged to maintain a dual mode of living, i.e. Japanese and Western.

“ . . . the outward signs and symbols of Japanese civilisation are not calculated to give the best impressions to the newcomer.

“ . . . Beware of using such terms as ‘Western,’ ‘Oriental,’ even ‘Far-Eastern’ or ‘Asiatic’ when writing on Japan and things Japanese. That Japan is part of the Orient and the Far East is understood, but the things which may be said to be quite true concerning Japan are not necessarily true regarding other countries of the Far East or the Orient.

“ . . . Do not be too ready to believe to-day everything said or written, even by the best authorities on Japan.

“ . . . Do not address boys as ‘boy’ or ‘boys,’ as you may do in English speaking countries. It is one of the many words which have been Japanized, but which means in its naturalized form something like ‘servant.’

“ . . . ‘san’ is a colloquial form of ‘sama’ and is essentially honorific. To say Smith san, therefore, would mean something like ‘My honoured Mr. Smith’.”

Further on in the book, the author, Shunkichi Akimoto, writes of the inward being of Japan.

“ . . . Now, what is the key which unlocks the mysterious beauty, and I might add without boast-

fulness, the greatness of Japan? . . . And why are her sons so clever in the arts of peace and so valorous in war; and why are her daughters so gentle, modest and charming? What were the causes which led her, of all the nations in the Orient, to take a lead in the advance of world civilisation and win her place in the front rank of the greatest nations? . . . All visitors to these shores are welcome, but thrice welcome are those who come to ask and study these questions.

" . . . We are no longer the land of the Geishas the cherry blossoms and Fujiyama. We are not the least bit exotic.

" . . . You don't have to watch over your things in our country. Here, there are not as many thieves as in your large cities. Even our poorest do not steal.

"You have nothing to fear here. At night, you can go into the poorest sections with perfect safety. There are no gangsters here. There are no kidnappings. We do not molest women when they walk alone through the streets. The poorer our people are, the more respectable they are.

" . . . You say we are far away from everywhere. We say: 'Nippon radiates in the middle of the world.'

" . . . Our women, although modest and charming, are not the dolls foreigners imagine them to be."

And so on . . . food . . . clothes . . . customs . . . manners. . . .

So much for the moral sermon for the foreigners. Some time later I read the behaviour code which the "Board for Tourist Industry" distributed among Japanese hotel employees. They were admonished not to whisper in the presence of foreigners, and not to adopt modern cinema manners which only made them look ridiculous. They were earnestly admonished not to ask any foreigner his age, not to suck their finger, and not to accompany guests further

than to the door of the lavatory. They must not enter the bathroom while the foreigner is bathing to find out the temperature of the water, nor must they offer to help him sponge down.

Kobe . . . Kobe . . . Kobe . . . Kobe. . . .

The express runs alongside the high platform of the largest and most modern port in Japan. Kobe's station, lying on a hill, rises up like a throne above the housetops. The town was stretched out before us, gay and fairy-like with its electric signs.

I turned my back on this sea of light and colour and night and experienced for the first time the twin faces of the new Japan. Flapping silk kimonos against a background of iron, smoke, stone, concrete and glass.

Seven colourful figures were standing in a row on the platform, looking as if they had stepped out of the Japanese Arabian Nights. Their silk kimonos were being blown by the wind and they stood stiffly upright. Their black hair smelled of the oil of the camellia blossom.

The group bowed humbly and I could see their faces. There were two women, three little girls and two young boys. The women's faces were chalked white all over and betrayed no emotion.

The engine whistled, there was a general commotion and the passengers took their seats.

The pretty group bowed humbly a second time in the tradition of old Japan.

They were bowing low before a man dressed in modern sports clothes with plus-fours, horn spectacles, and a cap surmounting his smiling face. The porter handed a typewriter up to the carriage window and as the "Cherry Blossom" jerked into motion, the

group bowed a third time, calling out nothing but sayonara, sayonara—good-bye.

As long as the train was in sight the group stood waving on the platform. The moon shone on the line and the man with the horn-rimmed glasses looked for the last time out of the window. His eyes filled as the lights of Kobe faded flickering into the distance.

The sea and the cedars were soon behind us and the pine trees and the rice fields and the lakes. Ten minutes after leaving Kobe we had arrived in Osaka.

"The Cherry Blossom" slid through a vast industrial city. Ohya San got out. His wife and four children had come to meet him and the great hour of meeting had come after four long years of separation. But there was neither embracing nor kissing. Not even a handshake. They only bowed in the same way as the other family had done on the Kobe platform.

The youngest Ohya, who was five years old, was the only one to speak. His head was shaved like a Japanese soldier's. He murmured: Otosan . . . Otosan . . . Otosan—father, father, honoured father is here.

Osaka City, home of six thousand geishas, thirteen thousand waitresses and eight thousand prostitutes. This is the industrial centre of the Empire where money plays a prominent part.

Banks, factories, imposing offices where industry is directed! Millions of yards of cotton thread run through machines, and the two hundred and forty bicycle factories are nowadays turning out nothing but munitions.

Streets are fancifully named, and one is called Lily of the Valley Street. High arc lamps line the

streets and they bend towards the street almost meeting in the middle. The lights certainly remind one of lily of the valley, and the Japanese people stream under these lovely trellises.

The Japanese knows that these clear white lamps must supersede the ivory white Japanese lanterns. He knows that he cannot escape Western civilisation so he Japanises these modern lights by breathing poetry into their iron and steel. How could the disfigurement of these rude lamp standards be better avoided than by bending them into lily of the valley shapes? And that is the principle on which Japan receives Western civilisation.

In Manchuria and in the Japanese concessions in China I saw similar lily of the valley lamps, and I discovered that they are to be found wherever the Japanese go. Two kinds of civilisation accompany the Japanese conquerors on their advance into Asia; their own and the Japanised version of Western civilisation.

The Pullman was empty between Osaka and Nara. The conductor showed two rows of healthy white teeth and sat down beside me. He spoke English and he could speak it loudly for he roared down the noise of the engine. His questions were those of a small schoolboy who has to reel off his lesson before going to sleep.

"Do you play baseball?"

"Do you play football?"

"Do you play tennis?"

"Do you play rugby?"

"Do you play water polo?"

Then there was a pause for ten minutes, and we steamed into Nara.

## CHAPTER III

### FLOWERS, PRIESTS AND GUNS

NARA is the oldest and most exalted town in Japan and it is the Rome of the Buddhists. The Nara Hotel, with its twisting roof and broad walls, has the air of a Prussian shooting box combined with a Buddhist temple. I think it is the best hotel in Eastern Asia. *Vogue*, the *Illustrated London News*, *L'Illustration*, and *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung* lie on the tables in the bars and smoking rooms, and in the hall there is a thick visitors' book, which is opened three times daily by a German.

This is Alfred Koehn, professor of flowers, and for the last three years he has looked to see the names of the guests who have left the great world for the peace of Nara. He can express heaven, humanity and the earth in a branch of cherry or apple blossom, for he is a flower philosopher.

Five minutes after my arrival in Nara he had ferreted me out and had begun to tell me about the greatest experience of his life: the day before, he had been the first and only European among thousands of Japanese to exhibit a flower composition in the Rokkakudo temple in Nara. Amateurs of flowers from all parts of the Japanese Empire had assembled to see the works of the masters, and an old man looking like a living Buddha had sat in front of Alfred Koehn's simple exhibit, a branch of camellias in a vase, for fully forty minutes.



Koehn can make the most of a story, and his enthusiasm reached such a pitch that we were soon sitting in a train on the way to the Kioto flower exhibition.

On the way he recalled the opening ceremony and how the high-priest of the temple, the three-hundred-and-fortieth Grand Master of Ikebana—the art of floral arrangement—had personally invited him to show at the annual flower exhibition in the temple.

The art of floral composition has been established in Nara for twelve hundred years. Buddhism introduced the love of flowers to Japan, and the Buddhist priests used to gather the buds which had been blown down by the storms and arrange them in golden dishes before the altar. That was how Ikebana began. Then the priests in Kioto made a philosophy out of flowers, and the chief priest founded Ikebana as the first school of floral arrangement. He became the Grand Master of the art; this title survives to-day, and flowers and their philosophy have become an indispensable part of Japanese life.

The chief priest showed us round. The utter simplicity of the compositions was particularly beautiful. A branch of laurel with only a few caressing leaves and a single camellia was arranged in a bronze vase at the entrance. It was very impressive; why, it was hard to say, but the priests in that Rokkakudo temple knew, for there are over a hundred and eighty rules for arranging a composition in that way.

An eight hundred year old Chinese silk scroll hung in a niche; on the silk, a mountain landscape is painted. It must be observed carefully from top to bottom so as not to miss any fragment. Mountains

loom in the sky; from the mountains, rocks; out of the rocks, waterfalls; then—houses, meadows, and streams. Far down in the valley of the silken landscape, brown people wander on delicately swung Chinese bridges.

A branch of azalea and some green grasses grouped in a shallow white bowl stood below the picture and somehow it expressed the landscape. Even to a European there was a true affinity between picture and flowers, but the Japanese knows that they express one and the same thing. The priest commented on the unity of them both.

“One is a faultless reproduction of the other,” he said. “Eighteen Ikebana masters have agreed on that. The artist worked on it for seven years and he has united the worlds of heaven, earth and men in the picture.”

On the way back to Nara Koehn enthused about Hydejoshi, Japan's greatest and ugliest general, who paid homage to flowers in the sixteenth century. On his campaigns he placed flowers in his tent in drinking troughs for lack of anything better and his warriors followed his example. In this way Ikebana became an art for men, and to-day flowers are to be seen in every walk of Japanese life; after the foreigner has heard of Ikebana and seen one composition, he will always look for flowers as soon as he enters a house in Japan. A place is reserved in every house for floral compositions and the obligatory scroll, and the same applies to dormitories in the factories, the miners' cubicles and the little rooms of Yoshiwara. The foreigner will soon be able to sense whether the flower arrangements harmonise with the pictures,

and he begins to know that if the picture is a mountain landscape, the vase must contain river or marsh flowers, and if the picture is a meadow landscape, branches must be arranged in stands of bamboo, straw or bronze.

When one is familiar with Japanese home life the higher significance of the flower vases becomes clear, for in addition to decorating the house, they stand as a symbol of philosophy, the universe, concord, and equanimity. The meaning of flowers is not forgotten and at weddings the *Sho-Chiku-Bai*, pine, bamboo and plum-blossom, must always be on view, for they stand for stability, prosperity and purity.

Koehn first learned this when he arrived in Japan after a ten years' botanical research in Sumatra. He felt that this new knowledge was far more important than all the text-book botany in the world and he set out on a tour of Japanese towns, acting as impresario to a musician and his wife. But when the man and his wife went on to Borneo, Koehn remained in Japan, a prisoner of the flowers. He put up at the hotel at Nara and for more than three years he has devoted all his time to flowers. He was classed in the sixteenth grade in the art of floral arrangement and later on the Buddhist priests examined his work and raised him to *Sensei*, master. Although foreigners take lessons from him in his art, he, the master, still studies with one of the greater artists.

His enormous bedroom is a flower-garden and every week he trims the pine tree which stands below the window, pulling out hundreds of thousands of needles in the way the priests have taught him. Two miniature trees grow in pots on his balcony. Koehn searched the woods of Nara for days before he found

cuttings of the right size. His oldest dwarf trees are three years old but they are destined to live for three hundred years and Koehn prevents them from growing up by entwining them with wire. Dried twigs, stones of all kinds and all the material for miniature landscapes are scattered about the garden-room and a shelf is filled with finished examples. None of the mountain landscapes, seascapes, plains, lakes and waterfalls are larger than a breakfast tray.

Copies of his *magnum opus*, "The Way of Japanese Flower Arrangement" lay on his desk. A small glinting vermilion fish was swimming in an aquarium that stood on the windowsill. This little monster with filmy wings and the head of a lion is called the Lionhead and was bred out of the carp by the people of Nara in the course of centuries.

The flower professor led us through alleys bordered with pines to the home of the gods of Nara. The smooth trunks of the pines and cedars lift up their dark green heads to the clouds, bare of branches to a dizzy height; and high above them the light blue sky spreads a sacred peace.

At their base ancient stone lanterns, blanketed with light green moss line the path on both sides, as if they were emeralds fallen from the tree tops.

Tame deer wander over the hard dark earth. They do not know fear and it is advisable to take some deer biscuits on a walk through these woods for the deer follow you wherever you go; if you delay, they sometimes pick the packets of biscuits out of your pocket and undo the wrappings. The larger deer naturally try to crowd out the young ones, and as injustice must not be done in Japan, the people spend hours feeding deer, making sure

that every one gets its share. The two sacred temple horses also live in the woods of Nara and they fare even better for even the poorest pilgrim does not forget them.

The most sacred animal of all is the white stag, who listens to the whispering forest in his wooden house. The Emperor presented him to Nara.

The echoing sound of trumpets and drums suddenly broke the silence and the brown earth trembled to the tread of a battalion of young Japanese soldiers, marching with Prussian vigour past the stone lanterns. There were several hundred of these sphinx-like soldiers led by an officer who as first among them led the way to Nara's most beautiful temple, the Kasuga Shrine.

The rows of old stone lanterns came to an end at the temple doors and inside hundreds of bronze lamps took their place, hanging down from the curved roof.

The soldiers stand at attention in the courtyard. The officer draws his sabre. The company presents arms. Without a word, the officer takes a book from the hand of a priest. Loudly, he reads a Shinto saying, as if it were a military decree. Then he returns the book.

A special train was awaiting them at the station and they would arrive in Shinmonoseki in twelve hours and embark for Manchuria within the week. They might be killed by bandits, but death is the greatest earthly reward. There in Nara they were merely saying farewell to a goddess.

The Daibitsu, a huge black Buddha, has been enthroned for twelve hundred years in the forest of Nara, and a path leads to him across the mountain

on whose summit the men of Nara gaze at the moon. Every yard of this ground is historic, but the new Japan has blemished it with some old canons which were captured from the Russians and which now stand between the stone lanterns. A bronze stag holding a bullet in its teeth bends over a fountain.

Beneath our feet we could see the Yamato plains stretching out. The first inhabitants of these plains, the most war-like of all the Japanese, were the first tribe to go over to Buddhism and Nara was the first permanent town in Japan. Behind us was the Daibitsu.

Shomu the forty-fifth Japanese Emperor carried the earth from which the Buddha was erected with his own hands, and now the great dark golden image sits on his throne decorated with fifty-six lotus leaves, omnipotent and omnipresent, inside a gigantic temple, the largest wooden building in the world. Sixty pillars support the roof and the great image sits in the position just as Buddhas always sit, a solid mass of 437 tons of bronze, 268 pounds of gold, 7 tons of natural wax, 165 tons of mercury, and 7,000 pounds of charcoal. Centuries ago, he still sparkled gold, but now he is a gloomy black; a Buddha sky-scraper. His face is sixteen feet long and ten feet wide, and his lips alone measure four feet and his ears eight. Behind his great bulk there is a circle of smaller Buddhas, every one larger than a man; and they are even more impressive than the Daibitsu.

The great Buddha looks out through the main door over the plains of Yamato. Malayans, Mongols, Philipinos, Annamese, Chinese, Koreans, and Indo-Chinese were welded on those plains into one people,

the Japanese, on these plains which have witnessed the greatest racial transformation of all time. Eleven hundred years ago the Buddha saw the growth of their culture, and how the Japanese Emperors became the most enlightened rulers in the East, when Buddha entered the hearts of their warriors.

During the Nara period the soldiers wrote poems which are still legible on the weather-beaten stones lying in the forests. When a warrior lanced an enemy in the breast he declaimed a short poem, and his victim replied in verse.

The Nara period lasted only a hundred years and was the most beautiful in Japanese history. At the end of this time the court moved near to Kyoto which was later to become the capital, while Nara remained the quiet retreat of pilgrims. There the foundations of Japanese culture were laid and the fantastic rise of Japan began. But Nara decreased in splendour and the sparkling gold Buddha became blacker and blacker.

To-day express trains cross these plains, where once warriors fell with poetry on their lips, over the lines to Tokyo, the symbol of Japan's unparalleled progress in the history of nations.

## CHAPTER IV

### TOKYO, SNAPSHOTS OF A GREAT CITY

IN the middle of the great Japanese bow of islands lies Tokyo, city of five millions. Although it was a smoking funeral pile after the last great earthquake, now as the train drew in past the new business and amusement centres I saw fine new stone buildings towering out of the sea of wooden houses. The approach to Tokyo is not through the long grey lanes of houses that greet one on arrival at a European town; the tall imposing shops and government buildings have room and to spare and their windows look out to the sky and not on dull walls. The Japanese ideal which aims at creating a new culture out of East and West has laid out model conditions in this capital, with communal buildings for work and individual buildings for the home; and the latter predominate. It is this absence of tenements which distinguishes Tokyo from other capitals, for only a few residential suburbs are to be found on the outskirts. There are not enough bachelor quarters. Japanese families abjure stone barracks for homes and prefer to cling to the small Japanese house which has fitted in so well with their life in big cities.

Immediately I left the station I found myself in Marunouchi, the business centre. Limousines, buses, tram-cars and bicycles crowded over the smooth streets and I was bewildered by the confusion of different architectural styles.

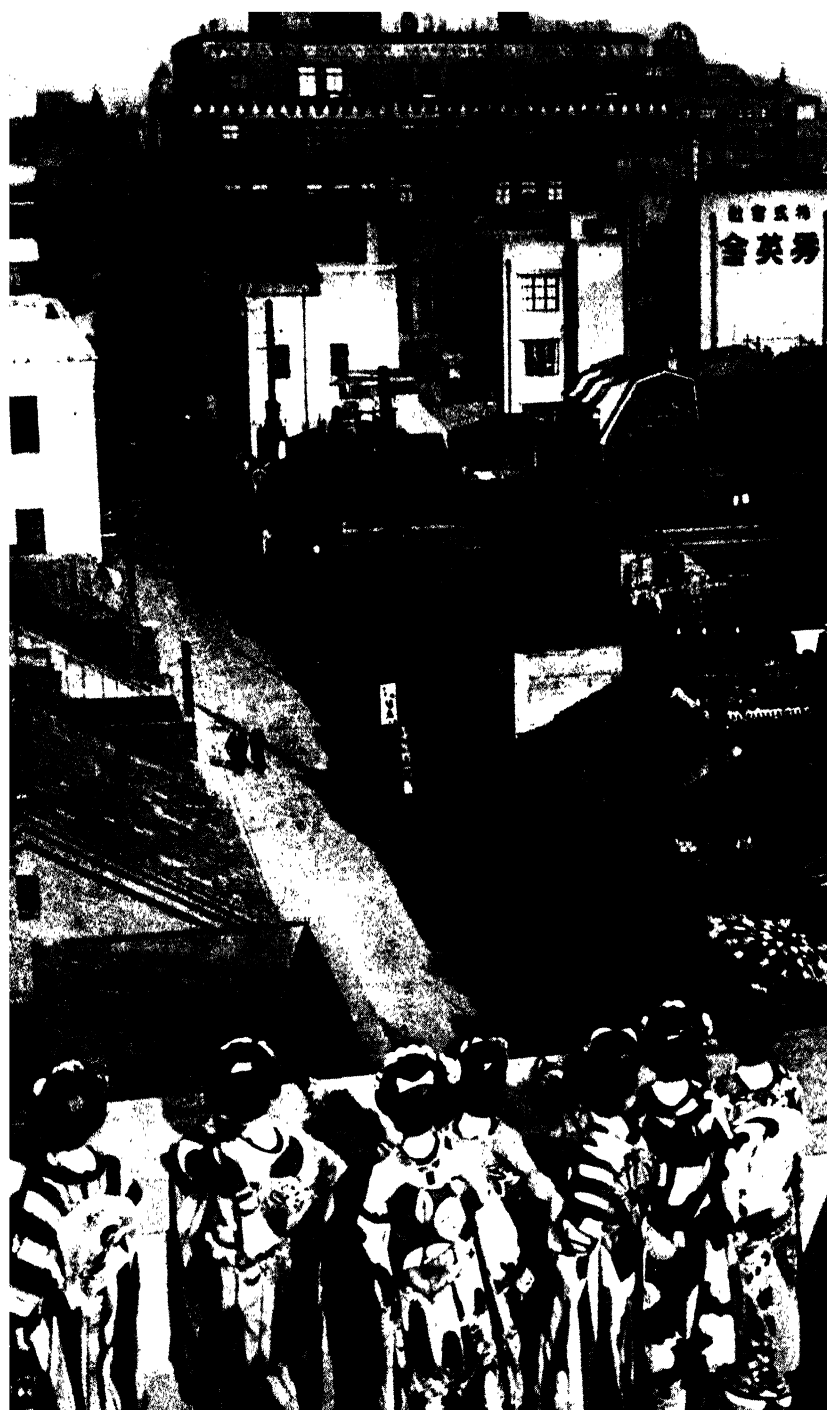


The station was a brick building in the European style of the 'nineties, while opposite stood a huge modern building with flat roof and dapper grey walls in which ten thousand people were working. Immediately to the left was the General Post Office, built of glass and concrete. The simple modernity of this building was striking. On the right of the Marunouchi building ranged tall houses such as are seen in Los Angeles. When I looked in the side streets, I noticed great insurance offices in the style of Lloyd's London offices rising up between three-storeyed buildings in the Dutch style, and in the distance the towers of the mediæval-looking Imperial Palace.

Tokyo has something of London and Berlin, Los Angeles and Buenos Aires, and the East. She has been able to embrace the best points of them all because she is the youngest. Barely seven years after the earthquake of 1923 this new town had risen up; in seven years she had acquired the appearance of the New Japan.

In Nara I had seen ancient Japan, in Kyoto the Japan of yesterday, and now in Tokyo I was seeing the Japan of to-morrow. But already after a fortnight I perceived that the capital was a mask, for it was more advanced than the inhabitants. It was partly bluff, for it had been built in the fervour of a growing national consciousness, not with entire sincerity, and the average man of Tokyo lagged behind the spirit of his new city, put up too quickly for him to acclimatise himself to it.

The Japanese live a double life, working like Europeans and living like Asiatics. The Japanese steps out of his little realm of bamboo and paper into his tram, bus or car, wearing Western clothes, which brings him to work, and he lunches in the European





style and thinks all day internationally. But when he returns in the evening, he changes into a kimono and eats raw fish, rice and chrysanthemum salad. Then he thinks Japanese, and his home, built for the purpose of radiating peace and free from the trammels of furniture and bright colours, is the real rest-cure.

In these quiet surroundings the Japanese business man sits on straw mats after his work and devotes his time to Confucius, Mencius and Buddha, regaining strength from their wisdom to play his part in the great advance of the race. If he is well-off a narrow passage separates his Japanese home from his European house, which is usually a small stone villa where he can sit in large arm-chairs and equip himself for the future by studying the doctrines of Marx, Fugger and Henry Ford.

And the son of this Japanese business man, who is still more modern, also leads this double life; he ceases to be modern when he crosses the family threshold and bows to the supreme ruler of the home.

"Tadaima"—I have just come in, says the son.

"Okairi"—Thou hast just come in, his father replies briefly.

The boy may have been strolling in the Ginza dressed in wide flannel trousers, and turning to look at all the pretty girls—which no Japanese should do—but now he too changes into a kimono.

All the civilisations promenade in the Ginza, the Broadway of Tokyo. Small wooden houses stand next to stores in the American style and weeping-willows grow near the silver arc-lamps. Garlands of imitation flowers deck the tiled underground stations. The rumble of the trains can be heard through the ventilation shafts in the pavements. Advertisement

streamers fly from captive balloons through the clouds and the sunbeams, announcing in fantastic Japanese characters theatre performances and concerts. Flocks of carrier-pigeons practise flights above the vast newspaper buildings. They are the indispensable messengers of the sport and sea-front journalists, and carry out their duties when there is an earthquake or the telegraph wire breaks down.

The absence of sabre-rattling is a pleasant surprise to the foreigner, for although Japan is one of the most modernly equipped military nations in the world, signs of militarism cannot be found in the streets even if they are looked for. The pavements do not ring with the clank of parade boots as is so often the case in the European capitals to-day. Once when a tank rolled along the streets, no one looked round though the caterpillar belt rumbled noisily. Toy soldiers and guns were exhibited in children's shops and one sometimes passed some students hurrying off to drill practice, but they never made a provocative or pompous impression, and there was no unnecessary shouting and jubilation when troops marched past. Soldiering is too sacred, too bound up with their destiny for the Japanese to make a game of it.

There is no feverish haste on the Ginza. The crowds are light-hearted. There are no fearful or woe-begone faces in the streets. Everyone seems to be without cares and confident of the future.

The Japanese morning papers may be the cause of the people's trust. The papers which the people of Tokyo read at breakfast, publish news to delight their readers, and they read reports of new victories and new successes—but practical victories and successes. The Press says nothing of world depression,

and does not lament falls in exports. And Japan's export trade has never been more prosperous. When a paper does announce that a certain export market has been closed to them, the next column is sure to contain news of a new market gained. Should the South American markets, for instance, put an embargo against Japanese silk, the papers will say that owing to the war in Abyssinia, Italy's import trade has been won by Japan. Japan's trade spies telegraph bulletins from abroad: Ceylon requires textiles, Palestine requires chemicals. . . .

The photo-news agencies in the Ginza keep the people in touch with topical foreign news. Wide World Photos, Keystone, and Associated Press send them photographs from all parts of the world of Japanese artists and sportsmen who are winning laurels for their country. Their victories are not just victories for the nation, but for the glory of their whole race, and the people enthuse over even the smallest triumphs.

The passers-by learn that Japanese soldiers are keeping guard in Manchuria over Asia, ready at any moment to tell the mother country when new empires like Manchukuo have been conquered. And the business men know trade follows the protecting sword.

These daily encouragements and the beliefs in the united advance of their race are responsible for the general air of happiness on the faces of the people.

The variety of the passers-by is as dazzling as a fancy-dress ball. Two young girls may be seen, one conservative and the other modern. The first is picturesque in a silk kimono as magnificent as a peacock's feathers which enfolds her from neck to toe. A broad sash of brocade conceals the outline of hip and breast, and her *getas*, her wooden shoes, resound loudly at every step. Her

face is long and narrow and powdered pure white. Her red lower lip curls below her powdered upper lip, and the gleaming black hair weighs down on the face, which is three times as small, like a heavy wig.

She contrasts sharply with the other who is quite the American girl, with her hair in the Joan Crawford style, a neat camel-hair coat over her silk blouse and blue-spotted tie. She wears sports shoes and carries a flat model of the head of Betty Boop for a handbag. This type is often to be seen in the Ginza, she is the notorious Moga, the Japanese expression for "modern girl." (Mobo, is "modern boy.")

But although students in their black uniforms and girls in their dark blue "gymmies" stroll along the Ginza, the street really belongs to the busy people who are going about their business. The older women are the conservative influence in Japan and they still wear kimonos, but about eighty per cent of the men wear European clothes of no particular cut or pattern. They have no feeling for these new foreign fashions and look far more decorative in their dark grey kimonos. As there are no Japanese hats, they wear straw or felt hats with kimonos, and though the result is not smart, the men do not mind, for they do not have to please the women, the women must please them.

Sometimes a sunburned half-naked Olympic athlete runs through the streets. He pays no attention to the signals and darts through the traffic carrying a rice sack on his back. The policeman turns a blind eye, for sport is a concern of racial importance.

Most of the shops have their names written up in English. The cafés and restaurants have international names, such as Olympic, Mon Ami, Colombin, Welcome Bar, Kaffeestube Rhein. . . .

## TOKYO, SNAPSHOTS OF A GREAT CITY 37

In spite of its German name, no one spoke German in the comfortable Kaffeestube Rhein. But the menu was not in Japanese and English as in every other restaurant, but in Japanese and German. The proprietor explained the German name by telling me that his restaurant was decorated post-Hitlerite modern German style.

Everything can be bought in Tokyo's shops, and I do not think that shopping is more international or cheaper in any other capital city. In some classes of goods Tokyo shows you all together what you will see separately afterwards in New York, Paris, London and Berlin. But these goods will not have been imported. They will have been copied, whether it is the latest thing in Paris scent bottles or American fountain pens, and the copies will be so exact that they will be indistinguishable from the originals.

In the evening the Broadway of the new Japan makes its concession to the old. The street vendors take up their stands, and their stalls are ranged in long rows on the pavement. They sell everything, from plaster Venuses and singing insects to foreign hotel labels and German bank notes of the inflation period. I saw among postcards of General Araki and Edison pictures of Lenin.

After sunset the Ginza is ablaze with neon lamps. Dazzling tubes of light encircle buildings and the searchlight on the roof of the fashionable New Grand restaurant, where girls in beach pyjamas serve black coffee, chequers the dark sky with white.

The Ginza comes into its own when work is over; then it bristles with man. The European does not feel far from home in Tokyo as he does in Peking,



Honolulu or even in Los Angeles, and the reason for this is that the future seems to be throbbing in Tokyo. London is the capital of the old world, New York the capital of the new world and Tokyo may be the capital of the world to come. The stream of people in the Ginza is like a marching column of a rejuvenated nation that is hurrying towards its place in the sun. By midnight the Japanese Broadway is empty; the electric signs go out and the pavements are littered with the book-matches thrown away by the men on their way home to prevent their wives from knowing where they have been.

Tokyo's oldest and most magnificent temple stands in Asakusa, the centre of the entertainment quarter. I stood in front of it gazing at the altar of Kwannon, trying to hear the priests at prayer, but a salesman offering snake powder against Loss of Manhood deafened the air, while behind me an old woman with folded hands was praying towards the altar. Another woman crouched over her child suckling it, and all the time the stream of humanity wended its way, laughing and talking, in and out of the stalls.

On the right of the temple I saw gold-fish swimming in an artificial stream. They were as fat and strong as carp. Men and women, young and old, kneeled on a hump-backed bridge dangling cakes on the end of string over the surface, and watching with the patience of sheep, as the fish vied with each other for the food.

This pleasure in simple things is even more in evidence at the Asakusa Zoo. The monkeys there are trained to bow ceremoniously, and at the cost of a sen, one gets a metal cup filled with worms to pour directly into the pelicans' mouths.

The Japanese try to treat lions, tigers and elephants in the same way as they restrain their trees into miniature growth. The kings of the jungle and the desert are shut up in small cages; the lion can barely move a step forwards or backwards and the fat elephant only just squeeze into his cage. The cages of the beasts of prey are enclosed in small wooden houses whose front walls are sliding doors. High suspended bridges, pagodas, temple roofs and other ornamental buildings surround the cages and must weigh on the animals like a bad dream.

Asakusa possesses a second zoo, which lies nearer the sky on the top of the huge Matsuya store. Two miniature airships suspended from two high iron pylons are pulled across the flat roof by a cable.

This roof is a rest place, a playground and a zoo. The children shoot down slides, clamber on miniature gymnastic apparatus, travel over the roof-land in the model railway and fly through the air on an elephant merry-go-round. Others play with the squirrels, goats, monkeys, baby bears, turtles and water-fowls, all of which are kept in roomy cages.

The grown-ups walk up and down as though on the esplanade of a holiday resort, and a few go into the Shinto temple which is situated near the airships. Others refresh themselves at the soda-fountain or gaze proudly on the little houses of Asakusa. And all the time the airships carry their loads of passengers from one end of the roof to the other.

The roof gardens are not fenced in, so that the ethereal atmosphere may not be spoiled, and almost invisible grey wire balustrades are the only safeguard against falling down to the depths below. The other store-roofs can be seen extending into the dis-

tance and there seem to be zoos, slides, temples and promenades everywhere, like little Tokyos high above the Tokyo beneath.

I had the misfortune to spend two weeks of the regular rainy season in Tokyo. The whole town was changed from one day to the other. Tokyo is the cheapest place in the world to buy umbrellas. Umbrellas were stacked up at the doors and one took one whenever one went out, returning them the next season, or perhaps not at all. But that did not matter for Japanese umbrellas are made of waxed paper and cost next to nothing.

Life was adapted to the weather. The rain saturated my shoes and clothes and they remained damp long after they had been hung up to dry, with the result that they were ruined. When I visited Japanese friends, I often found them in wooden bath tubs plunged in hot water. They took these baths three times a day and so dispelled the heat from their bodies, but we foreigners who could not bear such hot water tossed sleeplessly throughout the hot July nights.

Water-cans stood in front of every house and office, with rubber hoses coiling like serpents out of them; instead of ending in the expected dragon's head each had a shoe-brush attached to the tip and before entering one was supposed to pass the brush over the shoes while the water flowed. I saw similar cans prominently displayed in front of the new houses in Manchuria when I went later to that country, and no Japanese gun could have shown more forcibly that Japan had arrived on the scene than the cleaning requisites which had been imported from Tokyo, indubitably the daintiest nation in the world.

Hot baths are the greatest pleasure of the Japanese at other times too, and an account I read in the Tokyo paper, *Nichi Nichi*, of the terrible famine in North Japan proved how important the bath is. It was reported that though misery was so intense and the drought so intolerable, some families had not been able to bath for two or three days.

The bathers give the Tokyo side streets an air of their own. They scurry to and from the three thousand bath houses where they sit next to each other up to the ears in steaming water. Every one of them would prefer to go without a meal if they had to choose between it and their evening bath, which costs five sens.

This communal bathing of all classes has come to have a special significance for the Japanese, for class consciousness disappears and all feel united when they meet together in the bath.

The tradition of the bath-houses is already two thousand six hundred years old, for in ancient times naked bathing parties were a social institution.

The aristocracy has given the people an example of cleanliness from the earliest days. Some Emperors ruled the country from a hot spring, and their nobles and the abbots in the monasteries built public baths for travellers on their ground.

In the main-hall of a modern Japanese railway station train arrivals and departures are announced through loudspeakers. Once I saw in the middle of the station a miniature wood of green bushes.

Suddenly the wood moved, and split up into many parts, some hurrying upstairs, others sitting down on the platform among the ordinary passengers. They were camouflaged soldiers going to anti-aircraft practice.

When their train had left, another pulled in bringing soldiers back from the manœuvres, so tired that some of them could not find the step down to the platform without help. They held on to the banisters as they descended the stairs from the platform to the exit, going down backwards and dragging one foot after the other like children going downstairs for the first time.

Once on the street, three to five of them linked arms together, the tired carrying the rifles of the very tired. As they struggled homewards along the bright streets they met comrades, decked with leaves and walking with an elastic step, hurrying unobtrusively to the manœuvres which had worn out the others.

I saw a little flower-seller at a corner whose eyes shone with glory as he watched these tired reeling soldiers of the Banner of the Sun. He was holding an illustrated paper in his hand. It contained two pages entirely filled with pictures of the American Navy's manœuvres in the Pacific; the little man's gaze turned from the pictures of the American aircraft carriers to his own soldiers, and I think that after all he slept quietly through that Tokyo night.

Tokyo's night life is even more puritanical than London's. The modern bars close at eleven and only a few can get extensions till midnight. Diplomatic dinners, a few dances in the Hôtel Imperial, and a few hours' conversation in a pleasant bar are all that can be expected.

In Europe one can go to talk with one's friends in a bar, but in Tokyo two faithful Japanese imitations of film stars, little smiling dolls with hair à la Crawford, Garbo or Colleen Moore sit down beside each guest. They fill up the glasses and sit there whether

they are wanted or no. If the guest is silent, they sit quiet too, but they will on no account go away. They grace themselves with smart names such as Lolotte, Yvonne, Garçonne, Gretchen, or Sally, according to the style in which the bar is decorated. These girls live on their tips, and there is not much that they will not grant for money. But even with these free-living girls, men who cannot adapt themselves to the correct Japanese approach to love will not have much luck. I often saw one of them start up and go away because a foreign rowdy had said brusquely, "Come on, let's go!"

Japanese are repelled by this kind of love making; there is no phrase for "I love you" in Japanese. "We only feel that," they say. "Passion and desire are the last things that Japanese men will talk about. We Japanese can sleep three nights in the same house with a beautiful *geisha* without anything happening. We desire the girl but we do not impose our masculinity upon her physically. We prefer to rule her with our feelings. These are the only kind of men that our women love."

Flirtations are not often successful at dances in Tokyo; there are no social dance places and "Taxi Dance Halls" are the only substitute. Students and soldiers are prohibited from frequenting these places, and married women and respectable girls do not go there. In Japan dancing is a one-sided pleasure for the men. For ten sens they can amuse themselves with a pretty "taxi girl" while they dance a tango, and she helps to keep her family with the proceeds.

The real Japanese night life, although it is not limited to the night alone, goes on in the *geisha* districts where the wealthy frequent tea-houses, and

in the red light district where houses exist for those who are not so well-off.

A Japanese friend of mine is a professor at a university. He studied medicine in Berlin and in Japanese medical circles he ranks as an authority. One day we sat together in the "Fledermaus," a little German bar in Tokyo, drinking beer and discussing the Japanese socialist family state of the future. Suddenly my friend jumped up and suggested quite seriously that we should talk about Japanese things on Japanese mats—*Tatamis*. We hailed a taxi and in five minutes we were sitting in a tea-house in the *geisha* quarter.

In the tea-house the usually taciturn professor proved to be a charming society man. He had been a regular visitor for sixteen years and now he was making his first visit after four years' absence abroad. The proprietress introduced him at once to the many novices. A large album of photographs was laid before us and the professor selected half a dozen *geishas*.

The word *geisha* consists of the two words *gei* meaning art and *sha* meaning person and the *geisha* is one occupied with art. They act as table companions, cup-bearers and wine-tasters and ply their guests with Saké, a Japanese rice wine. As the Japanese wives do not mix with their men, these girls have to represent the feminine element. That is their profession and their calling and there is no foundation for the belief that these delicate creatures are prostitutes.

They are however not innocent school-girls, for you cannot play at love endlessly.

The *geishas* came in at last and bowed low before us. Their faces were powdered chalk-white and their kimonos were as bright as rainbows.

The four younger girls sang and danced and the two older ones accompanied them on the *samisen*, or Japanese guitar.

The professor suddenly took off his glasses and stuck them into a little *geisha's* belt, picked up a *samisen* and played his own accompaniment to a Samurai song:

“Even if the spear should rust  
The good Samurai name,  
The good name of the Samurai,  
Must not rust with it. . . .”

The *geishas* filled our glasses and the professor let himself go more and more, dancing Japanese folk dances in his stocking soles.

We were still sitting with the *geishas* in the morning hours. The professor did not want to go, for he saw how much this unique type of womanhood fascinated me. In the course of the evening I upset some rice wine on the silk kimono of one of them, but she only smiled. Later when she did the same to the professor, he turned upon her angrily, but again she only replied with words of gratitude and love. When we spoke on serious subjects and looked earnest, the *geishas* also looked earnest, but they immediately tried to make us gay again. I could not help comparing them with European, American and the other Oriental women who ply the same profession, and who consider it their duty to exercise their charm by physical means: whereas these Japanese relied on psychological methods. The erotic is a matter of secondary importance to them and their kimonos cover their bodies from tip to toe, displaying nothing but their feet even when they dance.

Smiles played on their lips as they told me about their



lives. All of them had tasted tragedy. They had been bought from their parents for three, five, or seven years, and what they had earned during that time had been paid in advance to their parents. They belonged to the house and had to live there until their wages had been worked off, and all their takings were appropriated by the house, which defrayed the girls' expenses.

But to leave their homes for the *geisha* houses was for them to exchange poverty for luxury. They were dressed in expensive kimonos which their parents could never have bought for them, and until they passed their examinations they attended the *geisha* schools, went frequently to the theatre, cinema and baseball, always sitting in the best seats. They were supplied, too, with all kinds of face creams, powders and perfumes and could spend long hours improving their appearance. They were always treated well by the proprietress lest their physical beauty might be injured by spiritual sadness.

Until they pass their examinations, the sleeves of their kimonos reach nearly to the ground, which is the sign of their being *Hangyoku* or half-*geishas*, and virgins. (Later, virginity cannot be demanded, but it is not undesired.) Even when they give up wearing long sleeves and become fully-fledged *geishas*, their expensive education is not over by a long way.

The professor asked if any of them had kept their virginity, but not one of them had. On their "first night" the bulk of the cost of their expensive education had been paid, and that is the aim of all proprietresses. The timid little girls have the right to refuse men, but the persuasiveness of the woman in charge, and the luxury in which they live overcome any resistance.

These girls hoped to become less dependent on the houses and even attain complete independence. One of them wanted to borrow money from the proprietress to buy her own clothes and then to work on a percentage basis with her employer. Another wanted to sing on the radio and for the gramophone, and set up her own house on the proceeds. She had a friend who did that, and she was earning thousands a month more than the best paid Japanese minister. She was no longer dependent on men. Two others wanted to have an easier time. They each wanted two friends, one a protective male who would supply them with a house and forty-eight kimonos a year, twelve for each season, in return for which they would change their dress for him three times at every meal. In addition each wanted a special friend, a *Ni San*. He could be a student, no matter how poor; he would become the light of their lives and if necessary they would pay for his classes. This would be permissible according to the *geisha* law, for according to it the true *geisha* does not love the strong and mighty, but are the protectresses of the weak. Even their patrons know that the *geishas* have *Ni Sans*, they assured me, and they acquiesce with a smile. Smiling magnanimity is also part of the patrons' code.

I once saw a meeting between a *Ni San* and a patron. The *Ni San* was going as the patron arrived and they met on the steps. They stared at each other without saying a word. The young man looked nonplussed, but the patron went in without changing his expression. This incident took place as a matter of fact in a Japanese film.

We also questioned the older *geishas* who had accompanied the younger girls on their *samisen*.

They had not much more to look forward to, for their happiness was behind them, but they had never lost their equilibrium for a moment. They felt themselves to be inside society and not outcasts like the demi-mondaines about whom they had read in European novels. They were fulfilling their duty in their position of *geishas* and as they helped their parents with their earnings they were also fulfilling by their art their filial duty. The satisfaction of knowing that they were artists raised them above the level of the women of Yoshiwara.

As we drove out of the *geisha* quarter that morning, the professor told me the story of a rich man who took two dozen *geishas* with him to a spa. The expedition was of a most innocent nature, and when they returned to Tokyo, the old man invited all his *geishas* to a meal in a tea-house. During the meal he was equally friendly to all of them and no one felt that she had been picked out. But when they prepared to take their leave next morning, their host smiled in a slightly more significant way at one of them and she understood that she and she only, was to remain.

My friend, the professor, did not talk much about himself but one sentence was sufficient confession when he spoke with feeling about his time in Berlin: "Leave-taking was so difficult. I had a girl friend, and on my last day I wept with her. What a pity that I was married. . . ."

The next morning before he went to the university the Professor placed me in the care of his friend, Tanaka, the director of the *geisha* school, who was to let me see how the *geisha* institution was organised. Who knows how long the *geishas* will be able to keep pace with the march of the new Japan?





## CHAPTER V

### THE GEISHA BUSINESS

SHIMBASHI, Tokyo's leading *geisha* quarter, is a town within a town. Its little houses stand in almost painfully clean streets which are too narrow for cars, although the Ginza is but two minutes away. Only the backs of its large buildings can be seen from Shimbashi and they rear up like walls protecting the little town.

We met a little procession in the streets. An old man pulled a rickshaw in which a pretty girl was sitting. She was about to become a *geisha*. Her hair was garlanded with silver flowers and the sunshine could not penetrate to her face, it was powdered so thickly. Her neck was also thickly powdered. Her black silk ceremonial kimono began at her throat and was only relieved with colour from the knees downwards.

A second old man, the *Hakoya*, her instrument bearer, walked beside the man between the shafts of the rickshaw. The procession stopped before every door and when it slid open the *Hakoya* presented the householder with a silk handkerchief embroidered with the girl's name. They did not stop at a low one-storeyed wooden building, which turned out to be the *geisha* school, but we went in and lost sight of them.

The windows were tall and light but the heavy black hair on the girls' heads seemed to weigh them down and darken the room. Their hair was dressed

with camellia wax and its heavy scent nearly asphyxiated us.

Three hundred and fifty *geisha* students were studying here Japanese songs, history, painting, Japanese and European instrumental music and dancing, literature, Chinese calligraphy, the art of conversation, caricature, floral arrangement, tea ceremonial, poetry, and English.

An old man sat by the door in front of a low table with a bell, a rubber stamp and an ink pad on it. As the girls came and went, they handed the old man notebooks on which he stamped the time to show that they had attended their lesson.

Before they went to their places they kneeled down with hands flat on the straw mats and their heads on the floor, paying their respects to the teacher. That done, they sat down on flat cushions, and bending over their books, they took notes of what the teacher was explaining on the blackboard.

The lessons are always short, some lasting only ten or twenty minutes. A map of Korea hung on the blackboard: Geography had been going on for nine minutes. When ten minutes were up, the old man at the door rang his bell and the teacher immediately left the platform to be relieved by a colleague who was sitting in a corner sipping tea. The map was taken down and the new teacher drew a delicate sketch of a spray of blossom. In exactly twenty minutes' time the drawing master's place was taken by the history teacher, and the former returned to his green tea.

During an interval I saw four girls in serious conversation in front of a map of the world, which showed all the seas and continents. Small grey

battleships had been drawn on the coasts of the great powers and comparative particulars of their fleets and tonnage were given.

The *geishas* were studying the question of naval parity. . . . Then the bell rang again, and servants appeared from the next room and pushed all the tables on one side. A curtain was drawn back revealing a stage. The girls took up their position on it, and with golden fans and painted sunshades in their hands they danced the ancient national dances. Wearing red and yellow kimonos they danced the dance of the falling maple leaves blown before the wind; and in check cloaks they imitated peasant girls carrying fresh eggs from one village to another. Then they mimed the legendary heroes of the past with warlike, abrupt gestures. Those who were not dancing sat below the stage and accompanied the dancers on the three-stringed *samisens*.

The next lesson introduced jazz. American dance records moaned on a gramophone and two young Japanese men in European clothes gave an exhibition of fox-trots and tangos. The girls copied them, clutching each other tightly. This lasted for fifteen minutes.

Violin lessons followed the dancing, and one of the girls accompanied on a piano another girl who played a violin. Together they tackled the Kreutzer Sonata.

Some elderly women in staid black silk kimonos sat on one side of the room ready to assist. They were former *geishas* who were held in great respect. Large brilliants sparkled on their fine, childlike fingers as they smoked and smiled and drank tea out of small bowls. They were honouring the school with a visit. They had turned from *geishas* to be social



directors and were now respectable proprietresses of tea-houses and *geisha* houses—the *Geishajas*. Some of the girls in the school lived with these women, anything from three to seven of them in one house.

When these former *geishas* talk to men, they leave age behind them, and their faces are made young again by laughter, the eternal rejuvenator—which makes them young again—just as it makes great Courtesans and artists young. It is easy to become fascinated by the charming smile of one of these old *geishas*.

“We *geishas* have no age,” one of them told me. “Last year there was a pupil of seventy-three in this school who wanted to educate herself still further. For, you see, conversation changes with the times and a good *geisha* must keep in the picture. Older men sometimes want a change and ask for women of our age at serious gatherings, and on these occasions we must be capable of joining intelligently in the conversation. A cultured, elderly *geisha* is most highly thought of, and she can easily monopolise the whole company in the tea-house or restaurant.”

After we left the school, Tanaka took me into one of the foremost *Geishajas*.

A small, fine old woman, soberly dressed, was the mistress of the house. She was one of the most beautiful *geishas* of the Meiji epoch, and she still looked like an upright but severe queen in her surroundings. The small details of her simple, but well-furnished house showed how magnificence can be refined to an infinite degree. Everything was delicate, clean, and of the best, and the rooms were almost too tidy to live in.

A heavy curtain striped with lilac and white, hung

before the house altar. The steps of the stairs were as highly polished as satin-wood and might only be mounted in stockinged feet. A brazier, and seven small, full-length mirrors were the only pieces of furniture in the sleeping room. The *geishas* squatted round the *hibachi* or brazier, warming their hands as we came in. We were greeted with polite smiles and they began to show us their treasures. Mascots hung over each of the mirrors, for the girls are very superstitious. When I asked them about sleeping accommodation they pushed back some doors and took bedclothes out of cupboards. They made up their beds on the straw mats and gave a demonstration of going to bed for my benefit. Then they folded their hands like children to explain that after a short night's rest they must hurry off to the temple to pray to the gods of love and beauty.

One of the seven girls was allowed to accompany us into the ceremonial tea room to pour out the tea. The tea ceremony is practised in its most rigid form in the *geishajas*, for the *geishas* are the guardians of the old Japanese traditions.

The old *geisha* told me proudly of the traditions of her profession, which is a thousand years old, going back to the times when provincial governors, feudal lords and high officials of the Yamato Empire were carried along the high-roads in magnificent palanquins. Pretty girls dressed in gay clothes and carrying guitars wandered along these roads, lying in wait for the travellers so that they might relieve the tedium of their journey during their halts, by singing, dancing and poetry; they also brought pleasure to the lives of the lonely villagers with their entertainments. These girls foreshadowed the *geishas*.

The mistress of the house spoke of them as "we" although they had lived a thousand years ago.

Thirty to forty years ago, during Japan's struggle to become a world power when the progressives had to fight for their ideals, the *geishas* were present at the important political conversations which were always held in small tea-houses. And sometimes a great man would die after one of these secret conversations owing to the indiscretion of a *geisha*. The *Ni Sans* usually organised these meetings for most of them belonged to a progressive party, and they found relaxation with pretty *geishas* who in this way helped to build up the era which may in the end wipe them out.

The *Geisha* Supply Office is the prosaic side of the *Geisha* poetic world. It is a modern building of light green brick and glass which rises out of a sea of wooden houses, seven storeys high. The tall structure is topped by a flat roof but the floor of the entrance is covered with mats. Telephones ring continuously and men's voices can be heard, in the rush of business. The telephone is hardly ever out of their hands, and littered round the apparatus and hanging on the wall are little wooden tablets. There are, I heard, six hundred of them and each bears the name of a *geisha*. They are painted black on one side and red on the other, black meaning that the girls are free, red engaged, and from five in the afternoon till early in the morning they are clapped round from side to side, black, red, black, red. . . .

The counting house is in the next room and there the men sit not on *tatamis* but on steel chairs. Papers rustle and the wooden balls of the Sorobans, the

Japanese reckoning machines, are flicked from side to side. In that room the romance of the *geisha* becomes the business of the *geisha*, and the atmosphere is very much like a bank, for all the takings of the *geisha* houses and tea houses are deposited there.

Red and white slips of paper were being counted and tied up in bundles. Heavy safe doors were opened and the white and red slips were exchanged for green and yellow ones. The first is as brought in by the *geishas* after their work, and the second type is used by the tea-house proprietresses as stamped receipts for the sum paid by the guests. (Prices vary from five to ten yen an hour; the time used to be calculated by the burning of a joss stick.) The red slips serve the same purpose as the white except that a red slip means that the guest has asked for a *geisha* specially by name and the price is in that case raised fifty per cent. The yellow and green slips are taken home by the *geishas*. At the end of the month the office cashes the red and white slips which they have received from the proprietresses, the money is fairly distributed between the owners of the tea-houses and the owners of the *geisha* houses. But this paper has a deeper significance than meets the eye; the method is employed on aesthetic grounds so that the girls do not touch money.

There was a round-table conference in progress on the second floor of the *geisha* Business House. It was the weekly meeting of the *geisha* organisations, where the *geishajas* and the tea-house proprietresses discussed all their troubles, such as the rise of the bar-maids in the coffee houses and how that and the emancipation of women were threatening the *geisha* profession.

It used to be easy enough for the *geishas* to compete with the modest Japanese girls, but now they have to cope with the modern girl. The root of this evil in their opinion is the American films and they complain about it a great deal in Shimbashi. These films show the girls of Japan how they can go about with men, but the *geishas* could never adapt themselves to such methods, and their fear is that the new generation of men will come to expect coquetry from the *mogas* and will not trouble any more with the *geishas*. But Tanaka comforted the pessimists, for he maintained that as long as there were *tatamis* in Japan, the *geishas* would not die out. The little women felt that this was some consolation, but not very convincing, and they had an unpleasant premonition that they were the last of the *geishas*.

On the roof garden there was a temple of Love surrounded by green trees. Two little *Hangyokus* had their hands folded in prayer but when we interrupted them they went timidly over to the railings and looked across at Tokyo's great warehouses and steamship offices, framing the picture of this great modern city for us with coloured silk shoulders and two Japanese coiffures scented heavily with camellia.

When we tried to pick out the *geisha* houses of Shimbashi below us we could not see them for clouds of coloured silk, women's kimonos drying in the wind on bamboos.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE HEROINES OF YOSHIWARA

THERE are tens of thousands in Tokyo who have no money for amusing themselves with the *Geishas* in Shimbashi. They find their pleasure in Yoshiwara, and the tens of thousands who cannot afford Yoshiwara wander off to Tamanoi.

Yoshiwara, Tokyo's famous love quarter, is no longer the romantic playground of pleasure that it used to be, for to-day it is put on a hygienic basis, but human beings are still sacrificed to their profession. Foreigners who dream on board ship of Yoshiwara's narrow streets, dim lanterns and its romantic nights would get quite a different impression of the place if they read beforehand the daily reports in the Tokyo press.

In Yoshiwara I found the cleanliness almost painful and great self sacrifice in the interest of national hygiene. Instead of prostitutes, I met little saints with genuine heroism in their hearts. Their fate is much more pitiful than the *geishas*', as the following newspaper account proves:

"Hozen Tanaka, the director of the Rimpokan, the social organisation of the Women's Patriotic Association of Japan, has returned from the Northern provinces after a journey of inspection and he gave these impressions to an interviewer of the *Japan Advertiser*, 26. 11 '34:

"A farmer in the affected area does not think that

the selling of his daughter is a bad thing,' said Mr. Tanaka. 'It is for this reason that when economic pressure comes, as it now has, he does not hesitate to hand over his daughter to a miserable fate for a small amount of money. Unless this phase of the present situation is recognised, the work of the Rimpokan will amount to nothing.

"Here are interesting figures I obtained in the course of my recent investigation. In Aomori prefecture, for instance, more than 7,000 girls have left their villages during the past few years. About 2,000 of them actually became regularly licensed *geishas*. From 2,000 to 3,000 of them became inmates of brothels and other quarters of similar character. More than half of the total number left their villages in 1931 and 1932, when the prefecture suffered crop failure. Since last year, about 3,000 of them left their villages, about half of whom have already become prostitutes. There are 183 villages in Aomori, and 181 of them have contributed their share of daughters to the *geisha* profession. Most of the girls found their way to cities through unscrupulous agents of private employment offices, and the chances are that the rest of the girls sooner or later will be made victims of these agents if the present tendency continues.

"It was known that the villages in Aomori would be visited by famine and that farmers would sell their daughters to ease their difficulty, but there was no movement in that district to avoid the evil. The movement to save girls has proved to be more or less embarrassing or obnoxious to villagers. I received an impression that village offices themselves are at heart opposed to the movement because farmers cannot pay their taxes unless they sell their daughters.'

"The sale of daughters is not a new practice—it is a hangover from feudal times. In Aomori,

according to Mr. Tanaka, when a daughter is born to a farmer the occasion is a matter for congratulations. The daughter is a financial asset, and when she attains the age of thirteen or fourteen years, negotiations for selling her often begin, or at least she is appraised for the future, according to Mr. Tanaka.

"The period of service for the girl is usually from three to five years. A brothel keeper is willing to pay 500 yen if the girl is good-looking, but the actual amount of money which will go to her parents is about half because the private employment office and its agent get a big commission."

It was morning in Yoshiwara.

Both gates of the district, which is shut off from the rest of the town, stood open, free for all to come and go. Children passed through the gateway out of the side streets, for they knew that they were safe in Yoshiwara from motor cars and trams when they played, and the girls there were kind to them and gave them presents of sweets, for they loved children.

When this district was rebuilt after the great earthquake, the streets were made straight. The whole district is not quite as large as Hyde Park, but every house is a brothel. Each house is one-storeyed and identical with the rest. This morning they were shut up, although the sun was shining brightly. The streets were deserted. Yoshiwara was asleep.

A walk in the early morning on a sunny day is an unusual experience. Policemen stood here and there in their sentry boxes, and they smiled knowingly to see a foreigner so early in the morning. One asked me whether I was looking for a taxi and when I told him that I had just arrived, he was nonplussed.



In the little Yoshiwara museum I met an elderly Scot who was visiting Japan for the third time. He always came to the museum of the daughters of joy where one learned the history of the district. The lovely fans and kimonos of the famous *keiseis*, as they used to be called before they were named *oiran*, are kept there. Lions, tigers, birds, flowers and pictures of battles on land and sea have been painted and sewn on the kimonos.

Yoshiwara was at its height in the 'sixties and 'seventies. It was then the Mecca of the Samurais, the privileged warrior classes. They came daily and the girls sang and danced for them, provided tea ceremonies, arranged flowers and composed poetry. Then foreigners arrived. They taught the Japanese that these daughters of joy were outcasts, and Yoshiwara was soiled. But the growth of the Japanese population, doubled in a generation, brought the final change in Yoshiwara, for too many people came and the *oirans* had no more time for floral arrangement or poetry. Instead of Samurais the girls had suddenly to deal with merchants who cared for no ceremonies, and Japan began to learn from the rest of the world what business was. What had once been aesthetic pleasure in Yoshiwara now became business, and the artistic heritage of the little *oirans* fell to the *geishas*.

At midday the town began to wake up. The *oirans* came out of their houses sleepily, dressed in morning kimonos. Their faces were pale and expressionless but their traditional head-dresses were in perfect order. These hair dressings take so much time that they must last several days, and the girls sleep with their necks on wooden pillows which

allow their hair to remain undisturbed during the night.

The *oirans* then went out through the iron doors from their residential quarter to their shopping centre, where they have their own shops, hospitals and temple. There are also rows of bath-houses so that the *oirans* may go fresh to the temple.

In the early afternoon the streets emptied again, for that is the hour when the girls prepare themselves for the evening. I looked through an open window of one of their houses into a dressing-room such as we have in our theatres for the supers, where each girl was seated in front of a mirror, bared to the waist, dipping brushes into liquid white and painting their face, arms, back, neck and breast, which were already white enough. A red stroke was added to the underlip and they looked like brightly painted wax models.

A porter usually stands in front of the brothels instead of the proprietors themselves, for they are mostly rich business men, often owning as many as thirty or forty houses. This mass ownership suits the police, for they have less trouble with taxes and licences.

"Come in," cry the porters to all the passers-by, but no one is disturbed by their attentions for everyone comes to Yoshiwara for the same purpose. A price list hangs at every door, giving the charges "short time" and "the whole night." The English words "short time" have been accepted into the Japanese language, and they mean three hours. The average charge for this period in Yoshiwara is five yen, ten to twelve yen buying a "whole night" including breakfast and bath. The other brothel

quarters in Tokyo are of course cheaper, but their reputations are not so glorious.

"Come in, come in!"

When the men of Japan allow themselves to be enticed inside they are shown a gallery of photographs of the girls, lit up with incandescent lamps. All the photographs are the same size and they are arranged under glass in alcoves. There may be five, ten, fifteen or more. All the girls are photographed in kimonos and their broad sashes entirely conceal their figures. One can guess, but not see. In the photographs one kimono looks much the same as another and even the faces are extraordinarily similar.

If he is not satisfied, the client can go on to inspect as many more houses as he likes, but no matter how long he searches he will find nothing but these dolls' faces in uniform, and when he is tired a porter will take him lightly by the arm, praising his various girls and before he has had time to notice, he will find himself sitting on the stairs inside with two women taking off his shoes. An elderly woman in the reception room will take down his name and address in the visitors' book. She will mother him and offer him cigarettes and green tea before she brings a brazier to warm his hands. After he has received these little attentions, the girl will be sent in and although she will not resemble her photograph in the slightest degree, she will smile and be friendly. Bitter tea will be brought in and then before he has had time to think, he will find himself sitting with her quite alone on a white draped mattress laid out in a small, clean room.

The clatter of wooden sandals and the howls of the drunkards resound through the paper partitions,

but the girl sits quietly looking modest, waiting for the first gesture of her guest. He will probably speak to her and ask her what men ask her at these moments: where she comes from?

She will not hesitate with her reply for she is not ashamed of her profession. She has sacrificed herself and she is proud of it. Her parents may have sold her for five years, two of which lie behind her. In three years she will be free, and she will glance down happily at her ring, for she is engaged and will marry when she is free.

When he hears that, the young man may grow silent, for he knows that her time will be extended, and that these girls are threatened with disease and if they take ill, they have to work off the time later. Their owners press kimonos and perfume on them so that the girls will pile up debts which will have to be paid off by more years of work. That is how a period of three years can extend to fifteen. And what can they do with themselves after that? Their parents will probably be dead and rather than be a burden to a brother they will choose to continue in service, even if it is only as a servant.

But if they do all this, they will be serving not only their parents and the house they work for, but also Japan. And the young man will probably realise, too, that the little girls are helping to support the health of the race by keeping disease and superfluous energy localised in Yoshiwara. When he looks into the eyes of this little martyr after such conversations and the girl returns a questioning glance, who knows what is going on in his mind?

The suburb of Tamanoi is the home of the illicit bad-houses, which are not acknowledged by the

state. If the police did not wink at these private institutions they could not go on, for it is impossible for a town of brothels to exist secretly.

Although these houses are private, they are not private in the same sense as the brothels in Western cities, for that state of affairs does not exist in Japan. Prostitution in Tamanoi is run on the same lines as in Yoshiwara, with the difference that the Tamanoi houses are not licenced nor subjected to inspection. The brothels in Tamanoi are small wooden houses which can only accommodate two girls.

The place has something of the air of the ships of white slave traffic, and the streets are as narrow as ships' corridors, scarcely allowing two men to pass abreast. Without the rays of light from the windows, the streets would be as dark as the ocean on a moonless night. The lights glint behind round porthole-like windows and inside one can sometimes see the girls awaiting their guests.

Men wander from window to window.

These windows present peepshows of misery. Some of the faces behind them are long and pinched and always powdered, surmounted with the high coiffures of the style in fashion at the time of the Restoration. These are the classical Japanese beauties. Others follow the mode of the little "modern girls" of Japan and wear their hair bobbed. Others let their hair hang down over their shoulders. "Chotto, chotto" (just a moment), they cry out to the passers-by. But some do not call at all, for they have fallen asleep and even the discipline of the Japanese face cannot be kept up in sleep. When their eyes are closed, the tired, suffering faces of these girls express their inner feelings at last. I noticed some sailors bargaining at





different windows. But they passed a house where one of the girls was sleeping, in silence.

The sliding door with the round window is the visitors' entrance. Another door close to this leads into the owner's house.

When we went in an old fat woman in a dark green kimono asked us to sit down. A small shrine hung on the wall over our heads and an iron kettle of green tea was brewing on the brazier that stood between us. Another sliding door divided the hostess's living-room from the stairs up which the *oirans* conducted their guests to the rooms above.

The old woman pared us an apple and seemed delighted to have a visit from foreigners; every twenty minutes or so, the door would slide open and one of the girls would ask for a cup of tea for her new visitor.

Our hostess had been in that house for twelve years and her son, who was at a University, lived with her brother. He only visited her once every week-end. The two girls were treated like daughters according to her. She had fetched them from the country, one for five, and the other for fifteen years. Their guests in Tamanoi had not very much money and they only paid one yen—roughly the equivalent of a shilling—per visit. However, each girl earned about ten yen a day for the old woman.

These conditions may sound surprising among people who can be so sentimental and full of national pride, but it must be remembered that the Japanese nation only came out of their middle ages seventy years ago, and the new generation of Japanese would stamp out this brothel business if they had the power. But the generation who are now ruling the country



were brought up with different ideals. Even so, the present government has the fixed intention of abolishing licensed prostitution. They hesitate, however, to take the final step because they are afraid of the effect that it might have on the morals of the country.

And it is also important to remember that the ancient Japanese morality does not blame the father for selling his daughter for the good of the family, any more than it does the daughter for submitting. But although those who accept Christian morality as their basis of life must look upon prostitution as reprehensible, Japan cannot, at a time when she is struggling for predominance over Asia, be expected to hazard her social system by reforming an institution, wrong though it may be, which is in any case, dying.

There is little doubt that a large part of the people would rebel, thus interfering with the uninterrupted advance of the country if, as a sop to Western reform such a revolutionary and unnecessary step as the prohibition of prostitution were taken. The young Japanese have no other course than to plumb the depths of this outlived system of society with their criticism, and to enlighten the people. But the government can do nothing but make empty promises.

When the Japanese youth become disgusted with these relics of feudal times, they can take the train and find solace in the beauty of the Japanese countryside.

## CHAPTER VII

### WHERE THE TRAINS DO NOT STOP

A STUDENT, in trim black uniform, was sitting deep in his corner of the Pullman, lost in thought.

The searchlights which divided the sky in Tokyo into geometrical parts, the imitation cherry blossom in the Underground, the wooden houses overshadowed by the new stone buildings—all the jarring notes of transition, had played on his nerves and he was yearning for natural country. He told me that his name was Shigezo Kamiya and that he escaped from Tokyo every fortnight and took refuge in the villages where legendary Japan still lives.

He kept looking out of the window, for he was bent on discovering other stations where he could change into a local train which would carry him to the heart of the country.

This time, though, he had made a new plan, and he had decided that it would be splendid to see villages remote from the railway stations whose inhabitants waded through the ricefields, and who never got nearer to a train than to stare at it and be disturbed by its roar in the night.

A wholly different Japanese people live in these villages near the railway line. The train of Western civilisation sears their souls lightly but does not halt, and it was to these that Kamiya offered to guide me.

We sent a boy to the engine driver to ask whether he would slow down for a few moments so that we might jump off, but he refused for fear of instant dismissal. A few minutes later we sent him my

visiting-card which was printed in English and Japanese. Politeness might succeed! The boy returned with the driver's card and we sent him back to say that a foreigner had fallen in love with the Japanese countryside and would like to enjoy it in peace. Could he not travel slowly for a few minutes and let us jump off at a prearranged spot?

Victory went to the Japanese countryside. A foreigner's frank admiration evoked his Japanese sentiment and goodwill.

We took up position on the open passageway between two rumbling carriages shaking backward and forward; the train slowed up and a village came in sight. Straw roofs, with ladders leaning up against them, reaching up to the sky, and on the topmost rung of one of them an old-fashioned fire alarm bell was hanging. The thatched roofs drew nearer; we sprang out, falling into a damp ricefield, and were soaked to the skin.

The Japanese express had picked up speed and disappeared in the distance. The sun shone hotly.

And we picked our way along narrow dykes which divided the ricefields. They looked like lakes. The peasants waded through them in rubber boots, the women carrying their children on their backs as they worked. Bushels of rice stalks were hanging on horizontal poles in the fields and were reflected in the shallow water. Each bushel consisted of a hundred plants and till a century ago the landlord paid his workers with these bundles which served both as food and money. The water flowed from one field to another through small channels. This method of irrigation had stood the test of years. Flowers were growing on tufts of ground which had been left over when the fields were divided up geometrically, and

the peasants had been allowed to plant their flower gardens on these no man's lands.

A man singing folk songs approached us. His dark blue kimono fluttered in the wind. A tobacco pouch hung at his side and he carried the *Koto*, the thirteen-stringed Japanese lute, in his arms. The sun beat down on his narrow bald pate and his appearance was made all the more weird by his reflection on the shallow water, which looked like a dark shadow sweeping the earth.

He stopped in front of the first house in the village of Miyakawa and struck up a tune. The bamboo and paper house, roofed with straw, was closed on all sides and seemed to be sleeping on dreamily, as the old man reached the third verse of his song:

“ . . . And the lark over the plains  
And the pheasants in the hills,  
The quail in the grass,  
All are thinking of their tales of love. . . . ”

Suddenly the house woke up. The walls trembled and the front wall slid open from the centre. A little brown boy in a blue spotted kimono laid a dried fish on the threshold and the wall closed again. The singer picked it up and bowed his thanks to the house before going on his way.

We also met the village doctor and his assistant on the narrow path. The assistant walked six paces behind his master carrying a chest containing the village pharmacy on a pole over his shoulder.

We came at last to the high road which led through the village. Women wearing kimonos rode on bicycles past us, their kimonos sailing in the wind, and peasants were bringing in the harvest on the backs of oxen and horses. Oxen carts rolled past loaded with clean tubs containing natural manure for the precious soil.

Children were coming out of school and took their separate ways home. They wore blue spotted kimonos instead of the uniform of the Tokyo school children. They walked in groups, for they are taught in school that groups foster the spirit of the community. A teachers' conference had just come to an end in the school, which was a wooden building with large windows, and the staff appeared at the door.

The only woman teacher looked more like a servant among the eight men than a colleague. She dispensed the inevitable *Tcha*, the bitter green tea, which only men may call *tcha*, for the women must talk of it as *otcha*, honourable tea. And when the men ask for *mizu*, the women must ask for *omizu*.

The headmaster explained to me in broken English the different forms of his language. There are special forms for the men, the women, the master speaking to his servant, and the servant to his master, and finally the language which is only used at Court.

The little woman teacher's European clothes did not become her, but after bowing, she went in to reappear dressed in a kimono of blue, yellow and violet. This was what she wore when she went home.

Her name was Inouye San and the only private room in the building belonged to her, for in every Japanese school the women have an unfurnished changing-room where they have to change out of their kimonos, which they always wear outside school, into European clothes before lessons begin. Modern Japan demands that the teachers of her sons shall wear the clothes of modern civilisation.

Before children and teachers go home they all bow before a treasured object in a cement frame that stands in the middle of the playground. The little

wooden school building looks insignificant beside this grey cement structure. It only contained a photograph, but it was a portrait of the Emperor Hirohito. This Imperial picture is a symbol of the omnipresence of the Emperor.

This thought unites the whole country, and it is the sacred duty of teachers and pupils alike to bow to it before and after school. The Emperor's portrait has also accompanied the Japanese to the continent of Asia, and in Manchuria and wherever Japanese school-children are to be found, these cement treasure houses have been erected.

In some schools the portrait is built into the walls of the building, but for some years the treasure houses have been built in the open as a precaution against fire. During the great earthquake of 1923 many teachers died trying to save the Imperial photographs from the flames.

Although the sun was beating down on us, the headmaster did not put up his sunshade, and we stood talking bareheaded. He could not invite us to share it with him because he did not know us well enough, so, as politeness is a national characteristic, he kept it down!

The heavy gong of the Shinto temple rang out dully above the sighing of the trees. The holy building was celebrating its foundation day. The ancestors of the Imperial family are the gods of this temple. The peasants stood on the temple steps, and clapped their hands three times, and prayed to the ancestors of their race.

My friend Kamiya also prayed before the Shinto altar. He believed in the godly purity of the human soul and that it can become a shrine of godly revelation. His religion taught him to compare the holy

mirror in which he was gazing, with the human heart, and that so long as it was clean, it reflected the image of godliness.

He continued to gaze into the mirror. One thought filled his mind and he would concentrate on that thought with all his heart. This thought was his religion. "Know thyself."

Kamiya told me about his religion amid the soft music of the trees. It does not embrace the world like the Christian faith, but was created for the Japanese only. Shintoism is a national cult rather than a religion. It is the cult of their nation and teaches them their sublimity, which is expressed in their godliness, not in material ways.

We looked at the glorious countryside round Miyakawa but we each appreciated it in different ways. Its natural beauty enchanted me, but Kamiya felt its religion, for it had been the sacred home of the Japanese gods who were his forefathers.

And the Ancestral High Priest of Shintoism, the Emperor, has always remained on this earth as the militant representative of his godly ancestors.

There can be no lovelier villages on earth. Even the poorest peasant's farmhouse is as lovely as a Riviera villa. The houses of rich and poor are equally simple. Solid simplicity is prized above all, and the subtle differences of the houses of rich and poor cannot be distinguished easily by foreigners.

Dark green cedars had been cut to form protecting walls for the houses, and instead of growing straight up, they spread out to shade the village from the force of the sun.

The houses were supported by only a few pillars,

and when the doors were slid open they were practically wall-less. The life inside is exposed to all and when the families are working in the fields, old women are their only occupants.

Europeans fill their houses with worldly goods but even the wealthiest Japanese keep their houses empty. Low tables and *hibachi* are the only pieces of furniture. Only one wall of these peasant houses cannot be drawn back, and behind it the bed clothes which are laid on the straw mats, are kept. The well-to-do usually erect two store houses for their treasures, one for clothes and furniture, the other for rice.

We called on one of the wealthiest peasants in Miyakawa.

He was very much the wealthy peasant. High walls surrounded his garden and the high doorway of his house resembled the main gate of a Buddhist temple. Narrow ladders led on to the wall and his labourers were standing on top cutting the evergreens into remarkable shapes.

Sawada San, the richest peasant of Miyakawa, sat on the straw mats waiting for us. The porcelain *hibachi* and the scroll in the alcove were, as usual, the only furnishings. Our host sometimes sat for days in front of the brazier, warming his hands and piling up the embers with two brass staffs.

Sawada did not wear the usual blue linen clothes of his class, but a dark grey silk kimono. His high cheekbones betrayed his Mongolian ancestors who had crossed over from their native plains to Japan. The fine oval face of my friend, the student, belonged to quite another Japanese type. His forefathers had probably come over from Malay.



Our host did not embarrass us with the honour of sitting on straw mats, but his wife brought out thin cushions to the door near where we sat.

Close to the three-hundred-year-old firs which grew round the house stood three-hundred-year-old miniature trees of the same variety, and it required all the attention of Sawada's family of fifteen generations to keep them small.

The headmaster who had come with us had brought newspapers which published photographs of the famine districts in the North. Instead of eighty ears, each rice plant had yielded nothing, and the greatest peasant crisis of the last thirty years was imminent. Japan had become an industrial state, the peasant children were living on tree bark, and the fathers were selling their daughters to the brothels. A cry had been raised throughout Japan: "Save the daughters of the Tohoku district!"

The schoolmaster went on to explain that daughters had not been sold in that village for a long time, but he felt very sad because the wealthy inhabitants of his village contributed so little to the famine funds.

Although Sawada's wife could, of course, not understand a word of English, she realised that we were talking about her, and she stared at us coldly. So we spoke no more English, and they all uttered inarticulate sounds, which is an ancient Japanese habit when one is unable to say anything without being impolite. The atmosphere was not exactly happy, but we soon stood up, bowed and took our leave.

As if on a word of command, the doors were put back on their hinges and pushed to; before we were out of sight, the house was closed on every side.

Then we went to call on the poor peasant Sato.

We sat on the mats in a tiny room with eight people in it, but when the doors were pushed open our view extended to the horizon.

The heads of the comic little girls were bobbed, the hair ending halfway down the back of their heads, so that they reminded me of little tonsured monks.

They stuffed unbelievably large lumps of rice in their mouths with chop-sticks, as well as green tea and dried fish.

Then the rain came on, and the kind peasant family would not hear of us going out into the wet.

While outside the drops pitter-pattered, inside the old peasant told a Japanese fairy tale:

“ . . . The old woman went from blossom to blossom and from leaf to leaf, chasing off the harmful insects. The plants of her flower garden loved her.

“One day a little sparrow flew into the garden. He had come to her for nourishment and hopped about the ground.

“A mischievous neighbour boy saw the bird and aimed. His stone broke the wings of the little sparrow and he could not move. Helpless, he lay on the ground and wept in the manner of the birds.

“The clouds opened. A dark bolt shot down and halfway became a hawk. His shadow circled over the little helpless sparrow, attracting the attention of the good old woman. She took the bird into her house and fed it. The sick sparrow became her dear little child. Every day she gave him three rice grains to eat.

“‘Our grandmother has come into her second childhood,’ her grandchildren mocked at her, ‘why does she have to feed this mangy little sparrow?’

“But after three days the bird could already fly around the room. In eight days, he flew away. The old woman was so sad she wept the entire evening.

"Day by day she waited for him to return.

"In a year he came back. The sparrow brought a large pumpkin seed in his beak. Then he flew away again. And the old woman planted the pumpkin seed in the middle of her flowers. Soon the garden became a rich pumpkin field. And one day, she took out the largest pumpkin to dry it.

"It was suspiciously heavy. And when she opened it, she found it full of rice seeds.

"The old woman was very happy over this, and shook the seeds into a pail. But the pumpkin would not empty. The rice seeds flowed like water into the pail. Many, many pails were filled. And the poor family became a rich family. But the pumpkin never became empty.

"The grandmother of the neighbouring boy who had broken the sparrow's wing, was jealous of the rich old woman. Yet the good grandmother sent her three bags full of rice. But the neighbour was not satisfied. She waited for a sick sparrow with crippled wings. But such a sparrow did not come.

"As time passed, the neighbouring woman became more and more angry. One day she broke the wing of a sparrow, took him to her room and also treated him like a small child. And this sparrow, too, got well and flew away. And after a year, he, too, came back. And he also brought a pumpkin seed. The mean old woman planted it in her garden. And great was her joy that she, too, would be a wealthy woman.

"Daily she went to her neighbour and scoffed.

"'What you did, I can do also,' she said.

"But when she cut open the first pumpkin—dragons and poisonous snakes and unknown bad animals leapt out—and ate her and her grandchildren."

When we left the village late that night, the moon, that eternal subject of Japanese painters, was shining through the trees.

## CHAPTER VIII

### SMOULDERING HAKODATE

AT the port of Aomori, which lies at the northern point of the main island, the Japanese bow of islands is broken again, and there historical Japan comes to an end.

We changed into a smart coastal steamer which took us across the Strait of Tsugaru. Not many tourists do this and I felt as if I were going to a new country. The questionnaires which demanded to know our movements and how long we intended to stay, were written in Russian as well as Japanese and English, and there is trouble in store for the traveller who goes to Hokkaido, the second greatest island of the Japanese Empire, without all the necessary permits. The detectives suspected every foreigner of being a Russian, for Vladivostock was now nearer than Tokyo.

The island of Hokkaido lay isolated and neglected for thousands of years; it was never the home of gods and it did not exist even in Japanese legends for it lies to the cold north, and the Japanese love the sun and the home of their ancestors. They were only driven to the island when there was no more room left on the others for the growing population.

Even in the seventh century, when Buddhist culture was already established on the Yamato plains, the people knew nothing of Hokkaido, although it lay only a few miles from the main island. The wild, bearded Ainus were the only inhabitants, and the Japanese only began to open up the island a hundred

years ago as a source of supply for meat and corn. Even now, only three millions of Japan's seventy millions live on the island.

As we approached the port of Hakodate, its Neon lights glowed on the horizon. Only a few years before it had been burned to the ground and now with these red Neon lights blazing in the sky it seemed to be burning still.

Long stone steps mount from the pier to the raised railroad terminal of Hakodate. This is one of the most travelled stairways in Japan. Immigrants, with no place on the holy islands, stream up and down, day and night, their wooden *getas* thumping hard and loud, a melody of wood on stone. Against this a mightier clatter is heard from the people moving endlessly like sardines from the ferries to the steps, the steps to the ferries, the steps to the station's platform, from the platform to the steps. But above the din I could hear a deep man's voice asking questions in Russian. Anyone whose native speech was Russian, would turn round instinctively, and the little Japanese detective who stood behind this White Russian, was on the look out.

This is one of the methods of catching Soviet Russians in Japan.

Come to quite a different Japan. The coloured splendour of Kyoto and Tokyo was over and instead of bright silk kimonos the people wore dark woollen ones. All the women wore kimonos, and a woman in European clothes would cause a sensation. Even most of the men were wearing kimonos, but when the rain came on some pulled remarkable Victorian ulsters over their native costume. Dark brown, dark

green, dark grey, dark blue—those are the colours in the north.

The people were more heavily built and their faces more angular. The Mongol characteristics come out stronger than the Malayan.

Hakodate's slim young vice-station-master has time to spare for Europeans and he is informed of the arrival of every foreigner on the platform. He goes over to these travellers at once and conducts them to the warm stove in his office where he gives them green tea. And while they wait for their trains, even if only for a few minutes, the charming young man takes free English lessons, for although he already speaks it quite well he wants to improve it and keep it fluent. He is ambitious, and knows that all the big guns on the company's board of directors started as station-masters.

As we exchanged cards a photo of a nude Russian dancing girl dropped out of his pocket-book, and the big fellow looked as guilty as a schoolboy. He began to speak quickly about the great fire which razed Hakodate to the ground in order to pass over the awkward pause as quickly as possible. Twenty thousand houses were burned down over night and for months afterwards, he told me, the people lived in sheds.

Even when I was there it still had a scorched smell. The inhabitants recovered more quickly than their town, and although bars stood at every street corner, gramophones blared out through the open doors and electric signs danced on the wooden buildings, most of the shops were still in wooden sheds. However, expensive lights were already hanging from the roofs.

The wooden buildings smelled of unseasoned wood and in some cases little twigs were sprouting, much to the amusement of the inhabitants.

The large numbers of junk-shops were the only reminder of the town's tragedy. Half the goods and chattels of the town were displayed in their windows. Everything that was still saleable after the fire was on view, and the town was gradually buying back its property. But the people smile as if they were in warm Nagasaki.

The sacred cult of flowers and trees is also supreme in the north.

The station roof at Turamaki was supported by tall, unpeeled birches which had been buried in the concrete in place of iron pillars.

Five minutes before our arrival in Sapporo, the conductor drew out his watch and announced the exact time down the carriage. The passengers took out their watches and compared them.

On the platform we met Mr. Knut Olsen, a fair young Norwegian in knickerbockers. His fortune was lost in Yokohama during the great earthquake. But he found it was possible to live in Northern Japan without much money, and he married a Japanese girl and settled down there. He speaks fluent Japanese, and works as golf and sports instructor and ski-ing master in the sports department of a large store. The Japanese like him and treat him as one of themselves.

Northerners remain Northerners all over the world. North Germans, Scots, Norwegians and North Japanese have natural bonds, for characteristics of environment are often stronger than racial traits.

There is a good story told by an American lady who had lived in China. One day there was a knock at the door and her small boy ran downstairs to open the door. When he ran up to tell his mother







that a man was there, she asked him if he was a Chinaman. "I don't know, mummy," he replied, "I never asked him."

The Sapporo station-master wore a uniform that would have done credit to Potsdam. He wore orders on the breast as in Potsdam, glasses as in Potsdam. Exactitude. Punctuality. Solidity. Eagerness. Importance. He was just as a Prussian station master.

Visitors are royally received in Sapporo, where even the most insignificant traveller is escorted as if he were the ex-Negus of Abyssinia. And if you inform the Tourist Bureau of your arrival in good time, they will even telegraph a message to spare you from the detectives.

Model landscapes explain to the foreigner how Hokkaido is colonised, for the Japanese love to impress you with their skill as colonisers. In the museum there are five of these miniature landscapes to demonstrate the developments of the last five decades. The first shows a Japanese warrior letting himself be guided by a bearded Ainu native through Hokkaido's dense forests.

In the second the forests are being cleared by Japanese settlers. In the third a Japanese peasant is ploughing between the tree stumps which are still in the ground. In the fourth scene, the corn is already growing and the gaps between the stumps have grown. The fifth shows Hokkaido as the great granary.

There was a smell of fish in the restaurant car, the Pullman, and the observation car, and when one put one's head out it was even stronger. The train followed the coast for hours on end, and all day long I saw nothing but fisheries on the edge of the Pacific

Ocean. The fisherfolks have to live and work on a narrow shelf of land that juts out between the foot of the steep cliffs and the sea.

The horizon was darkened with the small fishing boats that bring herrings by the billion to the little factories on the edge of the waves.

We stopped at Noboribetsu, a village with hot springs on volcanic land.

You go down early in the morning to have a bath. There are five different tubs, all at different temperatures, and as a foreigner you naturally choose the coolest. You have been in it three minutes when nearly all the guests arrive. Everyone in the village is evidently an early riser.

Men, women and children bathe together, and the hotel staff with the guests, for in Japan the gulf between servant and master is bridged on these occasions.

The bath-house is built of glass and everyone in the street can look inside, though no one thinks of doing so. But the bathers have the pleasure of lying back and viewing the morning life of the sacred spa of Noboribetsu.

A pretty young girl comes in, and after she has plunged in one of the basins and soaped herself down, she wishes you a smiling good morning and sits down at your side, naked like everyone else.

You have seen her the day before going for a walk with her mother. The earth smoked, trembled and steamed a sulphury yellow where they walked. The villagers could boil eggs in the water that gushed out of the ground.

Her mother comes in and takes her place in the same tub, and the three of you bathe in the water which a volcano has heated.

## CHAPTER IX

### EX-RULERS IN THE MONKEY CAGE

A LARGE sports car was awaiting for the two women after their bath and they invited me to drive with them along the coast. We drove for some hours through the countryside, which was like a well-kept garden on the edge of the sea.

The waves glinted in the sun and the shimmering Pacific stretched out to the wide horizon, where we could see the fishing boats. The road followed the sea shore, and the tall green trees on the other side grew more and more densely until they formed a green forest like a pyramid rearing its peak to the sky. A puff of clouds encircled the hill which rose up, darker and darker, higher and more unreal until it melted into a stream of smoke like a fountain against the sky. This smoking mountain was the volcano Komadatake.

We plunged into the wood and climbed the first slopes of the mountain. We met two unusual-looking men who reminded me of Russian peasants. They were the type one sees all over the Caucasus mountains and the Tyrol, but they had nothing in common with Japanese. Even their clothing was not like the other Japanese peasants whom I had seen, and they wore ornamental cloaks of bark fibre.

They bowed as they passed, and when we asked the way they replied in broken Japanese. These Ainus' eyes were not slanting or almond-shaped like

the eyes of most Eastern people, and their strong, wavy hair and long beards made them look very sturdily built. Their skin, much lighter than that of the Japanese, is really the same shade as Europeans'. The Japanese women looked specially slight and ethereal beside these tall men.

The Ainus ruled the Eight Holy Islands of the Empire of the Rising Sun long before the arrival of the ancestors of the present Japanese. These men are Caucasians and speak an Aryan language, and were the first Caucasians that the Japanese met.

There are only some fifteen thousand Ainus left. They appear to have come to Japan from North East and Central Asia and early Japanese chronicles record many bloody battles fought against them. The most terrible of all the Ainu revolts happened in A.D. 720, when they terrorised the whole land. The Japanese warriors of nine provinces had to be drummed together before the enemy was repulsed. Hundreds of Ainus were put to death after the battle, but some of the Japanese settlers married their women. Fifty years later the Ainus rebelled again and advanced as far south as Tokyo, then called Musashino; they took Japanese fortresses and plundered the country until, in the ninth century, they were driven back with blood and iron and retreated to the northern islands, their numbers decimated. Soon afterwards civil war broke out among the Ainus and their attacking force was wiped out. Less and less was heard of them and their population shrank.

Shiraoi, the chief town of the Ainus lies only half an hour's journey from Noboribetsu. The former rulers of the country are on show there, like monkeys in a zoo. The position of this race is tragic. They

are suffering the ironical fate of being the descendants of the race who wanted to colonise Japan, and who are now put on show by the people of that country as curiosities.

A girl descendant of an Ainu chief met me at the station as she does every foreigner. She wore a Japanese kimono and her long black hair fell over her shoulders. Her big eyes were as black as her hair. She took me round from Japanese Shiraoi to the Shiraoi of the Ainus who live there completely in their own way.

Large straw huts took the place of the Japanese houses and every one of them was in the centre of a walled yard. The family's stores were kept in a thatched building raised above the ground on stakes. The chief attraction of each yard is the great wooden bear cage that stands in the middle of it.

These bears play an important part in the life of the Ainus, for they are the sacred messengers of the mountain god. When the Ainus want to tell the powerful god anything, they shoot the bear and its soul bears their message to heaven.

Two black bear cubs lay in one of the big cages. The family honoured them as children of the gods and tended them carefully, but when they are three years old, they will be killed with arrows, very ceremoniously, and their souls will go up to heaven to extol the virtues of the Ainus.

The windows in the houses are kept open, only being covered with mats when it rains, and I could see some families changing their clothes in honour of the foreigners' visit, which had been announced throughout the village.

They were concealing their Japanese kimonos in

dark corners and taking down the curious bark fibre cloaks. A wife decorated her wrist with metal rings and one of her daughters put on a necklace, while men placed wicker crowns on each other's heads and women put on ornamental caps. It was like a group of players preparing to go on, and it was not until I saw a small girl smiling at it all and not making the slightest attempt to help that I realised that the whole comedy was being staged for visitors. When we entered this particular hut the stage was set and the family were dressed up in their fibre clothes.

They waved aside the cheap jewellery and knick-knacks which I offered, with polite laughter. Money was the only thing that they wanted. The long-bearded chief seemed indifferent to all that happened, and his movements were even more composed than those of the old Japanese.

What was the good of all these tawdry gifts when his wife already wore beautiful old jewellery? Her necklace was made of bright Chinese porcelain beads and ornate Manchurian metal discs, once used as mirrors, which had been traded from Chinese and Mongolian merchants for bear skins. It was a family heirloom and she would not sell it for all the money in the world.

A fire was burning in the sacred hearth in the centre of the room, and as there was no chimney, walls and roof had become permanently coal-black, in spite of the hut being scrubbed out once a week. The soot had also engrimed the lovely decorative work on the lacquer chests. These boxes that lined the walls were the family treasure chests.

The collector of old lacquer will find rare examples

which are to be seen in these huts. The chests originally belonged to the ancient Japanese feudal lords, who stored rice in them, and they were brought over to the north island on small exploring expeditions. The Ainus were fascinated by the lacquer work, and gladly exchanged bear skins and acted as guides for them.

Because the chief was a polite man he would not talk Ainu with a foreigner present and the conversation was held in very bad Japanese. It soon became plain to me that the Ainu women enjoy greater privileges than the Japanese. They are, in fact, on equal footing with the men, who talk to them respectfully. The chief's wife invited me to luncheon, which consisted of chestnuts and roe followed by green tea.

As is customary with the Ainu chieftains' wives, a dark blue pointed moustache was tattooed above my hostess's upper lip, from ear to ear, and a similar mark crossed her face under her lower lip. When she noticed my interest in her tattooing, she showed me a pan in which she had cooked birch bark during the early months of her marriage until it was a deep black fluid. When the brew was ready, she had cut deep wounds above and below her mouth with a sharp knife. After scattering the soot which had collected below the pot on the wounds, she had soaked them with a cloth dipped in the dye. The procedure was so painful that she could only do a little at a time, and the operation lasted for weeks. She looked pityingly towards her young married daughter who would not be able to follow her mother's example because the Japanese had prohibited tattooing. The mother feared that when



her daughter died demons would gather round her body and tattoo her after death, which is believed to cause excruciating pain.

The chief's wife wanted to show us everything, and took us first of all to their clothes workshop, where all their native clothes are made. Young elm bark is soaked for ten days in a tub of water. The women then have to chew it up and draw it out in shreds which are afterwards woven. When the cloth has been made into garments, stripes and circles are cut from old bits of linen and sewn on in patterns which have been handed down from generation to generation. The women wear sandals of salmon-skin with these clothes.

The husband did not take any interest in these domestic duties, and squatted in his hut as if he ruled the whole world from there. He showed me finely carved wooden letter-openers which he had made as a boy, and when we drank tea I saw that they were not letter-openers, but that he used one of them to lift his moustache, poking it up before every gulp. When a few drops fell on his moustache, he blew them magnificently into the fire as an offering to its god. He clenched his fists with the right thumb raised every ten minutes or so, as if to show that he was master, and the citizen number one of the village of Shiraoi.

He had been elected chief by the village council of old men and this meant that he was in charge of the hunting, divided the bag and was present at marriages, funerals and all festivities. He also had to visit the sick, make the laws and pass judgment. Suspects were put in a great pot of hot water in the centre of his yard and simmered until they

confessed their sins; when they confessed and were formally condemned, they were made to drink the contents of the pot. In the chief's boyhood they had even more absurd punishments. In the case of a girl being accused of immorality, she was forced to smoke several pipes of tobacco and drink the ashes mixed with water. If she survived, she was acquitted.

Although communistic principles have been practised in Shiraoi for as long as the Ainus can remember, the chief is the richest man in the village. All visitors are conducted to him and he sells them postcards showing him and his family at their various occupations. If they express the wish, tourists may take their own photographs for a small sum.

When I was there a Japanese came up with a camera, smiling all the while. The whole family strode majestically over to the bear cage and took up position, the first woman citizen next the first citizen. They then asked the visitor with the most studied politeness, to stand before them, and stared into the camera. It certainly looked as if they had done nothing all their lives but be photographed. And as a matter of fact, they have not much more to do.

These Ainus who used to be treated by the Japanese like wild beasts, now enjoy the benevolent protection of the Japanese provincial government of Hokkaido. There are about 15,000 of them to seventy million Japanese; their position is comparable with that of the Indians in N. America. As they cannot possibly compete with the Japanese they are condemned to idleness, and would starve if the Japanese did not

provide them with free rice. But they have their patron.

The Japanese manager of a department store in Sapporo, Mr. Watanabe, has a private Ainu museum. In one of the rooms there is an Ainu coffin from Sakhalin which looks like a Hottentot's canoe. Three rooms of this man's house are reserved for any Ainus who want to spend a night in the town. Two were staying there when I was at the house. And in the store an Ainu sits from morning till night slitting black bearskins and carving native pipes in the shape of Ainus' heads.

The Ainus have their champion in the eighty-five year old Englishman, John Batchelor, the only Ainu authority.

He likes them and they like him. When he first came to the country sixty years ago, little was known of Japan, much less of the dying race of the Ainus. Dr. Batchelor realised that a race at least three thousand years old was disappearing, leaving no written record, before anyone had discovered their origin or studied their mode of life. So he decided to devote his life to writing the history of this race, and in 1879 he returned to Sapporo as a member of the Church Missionary Society of London.

He has published an Ainu-English dictionary and an Ainu-Japanese dictionary, and his books *Ainu Life and Lore* and *The Ainu and their Folk-lore* will preserve their literature. And so it was that an Englishman gave the Ainus their literature, and the Japanese valuable information about a race whose blood flowed in their veins and which had lived alongside of them for 2,500 years. Dr. Batchelor has been rewarded for his services by being made

an honorary member of the Hokkaido government, and he receives a pension from the Japanese.

The Ainu men respect and envy him for his flowing white beard, for a good beard is the greatest masculine ornament. An Ainu who had had his face and head shaved in a Japanese prison, committed suicide for shame when he came out.

Although this backward race has no calligraphy, their literature has survived by being passed down from generation to generation. They pray to the highest god in the heavens, who sent down the goddess Aonia to their islands to create the Ainus out of the soil. She taught them to fish and to hunt, and when their life is over she calls them back to the sky. When the Ainus see a rainbow they believe it is a bridge on which two gods are conversing.

The warlike spirit of their ancestors occasionally breaks out, but their insane actions on these occasions are symptoms of a dying race. The Black Lily of the race, a septuagenarian called Anra, lives alone with some dogs on a mountain top, looking down on the ocean from the hut where his ancestors lived before him. He thinks he must guard his home from imaginary fiends, and when they terrify him in dreams he stumbles out of his hut, and the forest resounds with his mad invective.

He imagines that the broad ocean parts and that he sees Japanese warriors, fully armed, and crying his name climbing out of the waves to storm his mountain fastness.

Then the Black Lily holds a council of war with his dogs, draws his sword and charges down on the enemy with wild shrieks. He and his dogs beat them back, but they attack with redoubled force.

The ocean opens up again and again, discharging more hordes of Japanese, and when he feels that he cannot hold out any longer he breaks down completely.

2,500 years ago the Ainus might have become a great and powerful race and been known as the Huns of the East, if the wiry Japanese had not turned the tide of their life.

The last blow against the Ainus was the colonisation of Hokkaido by Japan a hundred years ago; and their end was precipitated by their change from the traditional meat diet to vegetarian food. According to Dr. Batchelor only 5,000 of the 15,000 Ainus are pure-blooded, and he expects that in a few years' time there will be none at all. They live unhygienically, despising modern medicine, and many of them die of consumption at an early age.

A young American, Kilton Stewart, is another Ainu expert. He foresees a still more terrible fate for them than Dr. Batchelor, and he has a theory that the Ainus have been infected with disease for centuries by the Mongolians and the Russians and that ninety-five per cent of them are congenital syphilitics. Last year only one Ainu child was born.

Kilton Stewart ascribed the superiority of the Japanese over all other Asiatic nations to their nordic Ainu blood, introduced long ago when the stock was pure and virile.

## CHAPTER X

### THE BLEAK ISLAND OF SAKHALIN

AT Wakkanai, the northernmost port of Hokkaido, the bow of Japanese islands is broken a third time, and we took steamer for Sakhalin, the most northernly island. Odomari is the first port. It looked white, cold and beautiful as we steamed in.

About a hundred people were shivering on the landing stage, and I could pick out the detective at once. To save him trouble, I did not wait for him to approach, but went straight up to him.

He had not left his smile behind him in the south, and whether he was only freezing idly, bowing, fidgeting, it beamed over his face. He took out the inevitable pencil and paper, but for a wonder, he was too polite to ask me questions, or perhaps he felt too cold.

I dictated full particulars of my birth, plans, adventures and opinions, and by the time I had denied knowledge of Russian, that I had come via Siberia, and assured him that I was not staying long and would return by the same route, I had filled three pages.

The detective re-read what I had dictated, three times, bowed with a smile and asked no questions. He was evidently satisfied. At last he had found a foreigner who told everything and did not mind repeating what he had been asked already on the other islands. And he could not help asking

questions, for his chief demanded dates, names and numbers; the longer his list the more he was praised.

He invited me into his office. Flat, oval porcelain bowls of a dull yellow colour stood on a low table. Each contained about half an inch of water, and a heap of stones covered with fine, dark green moss like miniature Stone-Pines.

The detective lifted up one of the stones and showed me how the water is sucked through it to give life to the moss.

The view from his window was bleak landscape of ice, snow and water, and the damp, green plant in his room was the only living thing in sight. He sat humbly before these marvels of nature, which bring comfort to the private life of a Japanese detective on the bleak island of Sakhalin.

A monk in a dark brown robe was standing outside his church. This was the Austrian Franciscan Father, the first representative of Europe on the threshold of the island.

Shoes have to be removed before entering his church, whose floor is laid with Japanese mats. A small Christian community has assembled round him, and his task of conversion is not difficult, for the Japanese soul in this Northern island is not immersed in the pomp of the Shinto religion and they are more open to foreign belief than in the South.

The roof of all the compartments in the trains in Sakhalin are pierced with chimneys, and the trains look like a chain of smoking huts on wheels rolling through the white country.

The passengers crowded round the stoves inside. Travellers feel too far away from the outside world to look upon their fellow-passengers as foreigners and we all, Japanese, white Russians and Europeans, felt like brothers by the time we reached Toyohara, the capital of Sakhalin.

The Japanese inns and even the brothels have a homely atmosphere. In the Hanaya hotel paper flowers are stuck on the luggage instead of the usual hotel labels, and when you arrive three pretty women in kimonos take off your shoes at the door.

The hotel servant made a deep bow, his forehead nearly sweeping the ground. In the lonely north the Japanese do not conceal their inferiority complex with an air of superiority.

Labour is cheap in Sakhalin, and every guest in the hotel has a personal maid. But these chambermaids are nurses rather than servants. As soon as you arrive, the maid sits down beside you on the straw mats and lights the fire in the *hibachi*, which is a round porcelain bowl. She stirs up the white charcoal ashes which fill three quarters of the bowl, lays on more fuel, pokes the fire with two small staffs to keep it glowing brightly, and boils an old iron kettle to make green tea.

Her hair is done in the magnificent old-fashioned style and with her fine almost transparent skin she looks like a figure that has stepped out of a Japanese woodcut.

She undresses you entirely. Her nimble fingers glide gently over your body. She sees that you are cold. So you stand there while she busies herself about you, and when you are undressed she helps



you into a thick woollen kimono and a sash that ties with a bow at the back.

That over, she bows to the ground and the master of the bath comes in. He is a real virtuoso and conducts you to a bath amid exotic plants which take on the most luxuriant forms in the steamy atmosphere. He sluices you with three cans of very hot water and then soaps and scrubs you down till your body aches. Then, when you are perhaps half as clean as a Japanese, you may step into the bath. It is some minutes before you grow accustomed to the heat. After the bath the virtuoso massages you, towels you, and after handing you comb, brush and tooth-paste, leads you back to your room, where your supper will have been set out.

The maid feeds you as a bird feeds its young, and hangs about the room till you say that you want to go to bed, thereupon she will tuck you up, put out the light, and only then will she leave you.

Next morning when you are sound asleep, she will be sitting beside you on the mats. The tea-water will be simmering on the *hibachi* while she watches your sleeping face. As soon as you flicker an eyelid, she smiles.

This morning smile of the pretty Japanese woman is unforgettable, and you will feel that the most modest and charming women in the world are to be found in Sakhalin.

Six years ago no one in Sakhalin had eaten sausage. Then Anton Nürnberger, a Bohemian butcher, arrived and the Japanese thought that he had brought some dark-coloured bananas with him. They were not to be convinced, and the unfortunate Nürnberger had to eat his sausages himself.

He cycled over the greater part of the island until he came upon the Oroks, a Mongol tribe which lives on reindeer flesh. They found Nürnberger's sausages very tasty, and as they had no money, they exchanged reindeer skins for them. The sausage pioneer wandered on from tribe to tribe trading his wares for skins, and by the time that he arrived in Toyohara, the whole town was talking about his sausages.

Business began to boom, and he built a one-storeyed shop in the main street. A dozen pairs of slippers stood at the door for his customers.

To-day orders are continually being given by telephone, and the butcher can scarcely meet the demand. Fortunately he has found that he can get sausage skins from Manchuria.

Pictures of Napoleon and the Empress Marie Louise hung in his sitting-room. When he explained to a Japanese who Napoleon was, the Japanese replied with a smile, "and the lady is Cleopatra, I suppose?"

The sausage-maker married a young Polish girl, and as neither of them could speak the other's language, they spoke Japanese to each other. Nürnberger even wrote to the girl's father in Japanese when he asked to marry her.

The father-in-law is an example of the rigours of fate. He has never seen his own country, for his ancestors were Polish patriots banished by the Czar to Sakhalin which was, after Siberia, the customary place for exiles. The Poles stayed on in the island after Japan got the southern half after the Russo-Japanese war; their children went to the Japanese school and were brought up as fair, blue-eyed Japanese, and who in all the world knows about the small, forlorn Polish community of Sakhalin?

White Russians also live in Sakhalin, but do not sleep on mats like the Japanese; their thick peasant mattresses and bedclothes nearly reach the ceiling. They live among the Japanese in fast friendship, adding to the international flavour of Toyohara, which became a meeting place at the end of the world.

Japan needs every available piece of land. But it should be near the mother country. Sakhalin seemed near enough when they took it from the Russians thirty years ago, although it was a bare, cheerless land, with short summers and long winters and far too cold for the children of the Sun Goddess.

However, the Japanese clenched their teeth, and crossed over the straits to the cold of Sakhalin. There was pasture-land, but no sheep, so they imported flocks from Australia and soon found new methods for breeding them. There were arctic woods but neither silver fox nor musk-rat lived in them, so they were imported from Canada, and Japanese doctors, lawyers, and judges built houses and farms and became fur-breeders. Some of these farms started with only two runs and have now developed to hundreds, the fox king always in a special cage by himself. In five years the silver fox farmers of South Sakhalin may be competing with the Canadians.

The women of Japan are already wearing fox furs in winter with their silk kimonos. They do not suit them very well, but they feel it is their duty to help the brave pioneers.

Some of the Japanese who went there had not the money to buy silver foxes from North America, so they wrapped themselves up against the cold and fished through holes bored in the ice.

The boldest of these pioneers went to the northern forests. They felled trees in the snow-storms and pulled out their roots from the hard earth with machines. Then they ploughed the land. That was thirty years ago, and now model farms and fields of vegetables have taken the place of the virgin forests.

Modern buses travel along the roads that now join up the settlements and the farmers are transported cheaply from village to village. Japan supplies her colonists with cheap civilisation; in addition a railway runs through the country.

The Sakhalin Research Institute stands in the small town of Kunoma. It is a modern building not unlike the hotel and offices at Croydon Aerodrome. There is, of course, a museum, which contains exhibits of every kind of fish, plant and tree indigenous to Sakhalin, and the visitors who may have the intention of settling are showered with brightly coloured postcards and leaflets which make out Sakhalin to be the new Eldorado.

Where work has to be done there must be amusements, and in Toyohara's main street modern bars await the colonists. The electric signs are in Roman letters. The Neon lights invite one to the Café Nana, the Café Nonsense, and the Café Prince. How these places got their names, the inhabitants themselves have long forgotten.

The Oroks, the half-Eskimo natives of the island, become more and more confused by these things and retreat to the marshes in the North: but there they find Japanese soldiers.

The soldiers of Japan stand there on the fiftieth degree of latitude, the most northerly point of the

bow of islands. Here Japan ends. The sixteen-petalled Chrysanthemum, the Imperial crest, is cut in the granite of the frontier stones.

Beyond the frontier stretches about a mile and a half of no man's land. Then another frontier line rises up. That is the beginning of the Soviet-Russian half of the island. Five hundred Japanese face five hundred Russians behind their frontiers.

The soldier from southern Japan freezes. White icy wastes to the right, to the left, before and behind. His home in sunny, southern Kyushu is far away. In his mind, the Japanese soldier looks down twenty-five degrees of latitude. In a flash of his imagination, he sees the whole of the Island Empire. And the more he thinks of it, the more he digs into the biting cold. And when his thoughts are full of his home—the land of perpetual summer—he becomes warm in body and in mind.

PART II

THE MUSES OF THE CONQUERORS

•



## CHAPTER XI

### MUSIC!

NOR only the spirit of their own culture but the cultures of all the world accompany the great marching columns of the Japanese. The spirit of Bacon, Lincoln, Beethoven, Dostoievski, and the spirit of Buddha and Confucius infuses the minds of the race it pushes onwards. The Japanese do not look on these philosophies as exotic fields of interest as Europeans look upon Buddha and Confucius, and they have taken the ideas of Kant or Lincoln much more seriously than the Europeans have taken, say, Laotse and Confucius. Nowhere in the world are the intellectual more varied in their interests than in Japan.

The great process of melting East and West has begun. The stream of Japanese culture does not now flow any longer alongside Western civilisation, as was the case in the early years of the movement, but they run together in the same bed, and Japan is waiting patiently till it is running limpidly before directing off a channel which may in the end become the river of world culture.

The Japanese realised that the repercussion of the meeting of East and West which has been felt almost alone in Japan, has created a new impulse. There is a remarkable fusion of extremes in Japanese art and mental outlook on life. Something of worth has resulted from the blending process, but there



are elements which will not fuse. Such things are not changed, but are welded in their original state, and in this way they reach down into the Japanese soul perhaps better than if they were adapted.

Sixty years ago a British Marine drummer stood on the quay at Yokohama and taught a few Japanese sailors how to beat their drums. That was how Western music was first officially introduced into Japan.

To-day when one reads the music page of a Japanese paper, one may see that Haydn's *Toy Symphony* is going to be played under the direction of the eleven-year-old conductor, Shigetaka Arima, or that Weill's "*Lindbergh's Flight*" is to be produced in Japanese or that *Carmen* is to have its première in Japanese. It may also be announced that Grieg's *Peer-Gynt Symphony* will be broadcast during the Children's Hour or that the fourteen-year-old violin virtuoso, Nejiko Suwa, is giving a concert of Tschaikovski, Mendelssohn, Saint Saens, and Berlioz.

Reproductions of the death-masks of Beethoven, Mozart, Wagner and Verdi can be bought by the dozen in the open street, and they seem to come to life under red, yellow, blue and violet lights. They are cheap enough for the poorest student to buy, and they suit the bareness of the unfurnished Japanese rooms. These white masks seem to whisper their symphonies through the street which is perhaps the most musical in the world. Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony*, the *Eroica* and the *Ninth* but most of all the *Fifth* are played in the music shops, and customers can listen to records gratis for as long as

they like. They sit late into the evening in their *kojos* listening to their favourite symphonies. They like Beethoven most of all, and he is the leading composer for Japan. Nowhere else in the world are so many Beethoven records sold, and heads of Beethoven, larger than life-size, decorate advertisements that announce the concerts devoted to his works.

The music-lovers of Yokohama and Tokyo often belong to men's, women's or children's choirs, or they are members of a Haydn quartette, a mandoline orchestra or a Wagner Society. Japanese soloists interpret Bach, Verdi and Chopin, in the concert-halls before audiences of three thousand. And symphony concerts are broadcast twice a week for those who cannot attend them. Two million radios are issued yearly in Japan.

Many Japanese will talk by the hour about music, and I met some who knew the score of Tristan though they had never been to any Wagner. They find nothing foreign in Western music, and enjoy it as much as if one of their own countrymen had composed it. Their grandfathers wanted to adapt the music of the West for Japan, but their efforts fortunately failed. The first experiments were made under the aegis of the Imperial Academy of Music which was founded sixty years ago, shortly after European music was introduced.

The people learn to play in this institution tunes in Japanese rhythm on European instruments. They also taught them how to interpret European melodies on Japanese instruments, and recommended that large symphony orchestras composed of European and Japanese instruments should be formed.

It was, however, soon realised that there was no connecting link between the music of East and West and that European music could not be adapted for Japan. So the Academy began all over again, and the musical education was Germanized as it is to-day, where the great European conductor, Klaus Pringsheim, is still teaching there.

When I visited a Tokyo elementary school three respected words were written upon the blackboard "The European Folk-song," and underneath them were the notes of "Heidenröslein." On the right there was a piano, and on the left a gramophone. The record library was kept below, and contained a quantity of Western folk-songs.

Even by Western standards, the Tokyo music season is on a high level. The Hibiya Hall, where the conductor of the new Symphony Orchestra, Viscount Hidemaro Konoye plays, is always full to the last seat. The public is fifty per cent Japanese, and they show their appreciation differently from Western audiences; but although their faces are immobile as chiselled marble, an atmosphere of great feeling fills the hall.

In contrast to the crowded concert-hall where Japanese artists play, the comparatively sparsely attended concerts of Western artists are surprising. But the time of European artists is over in Japan and only a few of the specially popular foreign players play before full houses. The public prefers to hear Bach cantatas played by their own artists, and when Japanese artists go on foreign tours their compatriots follow their progress eagerly.

Viscount Konoye has already appeared on the

platform in European capitals, and in Berlin he conducted the Philharmonic Orchestra.

Tokyo is kept informed of musical events, and it is impossible to tell Japanese music-lovers anything new. Every new work is sent to Tokyo by the shortest route, and they are often given more notice by the fifteen Japanese musical papers than in Europe.

Japan owes the rise of music in the country a great deal to the Imperial family. The Imperial princes and the Empress herself go to concerts.

I visited the music department of the Imperial Household. The building is enclosed in the palace buildings and there is a staff of one hundred and twenty attached to it, who are one and all rising Japanese musicians.

They give concerts three times a week of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven for the Emperor, for these are his favourite composers.

But Japanese music is not forgotten in their enthusiasm for foreign music. The official court music is *Gagaku*, which is played at all important ceremonies in the palace, and once a year in public. When I was in the music section of the Imperial Household, I heard a performance by the Emperor's private orchestra. Masked dancers danced thousand-year-old Korean and Siamese dances in gorgeous costumes. The music was ceremonial and monotonal, played on queer instruments and a great drum. When a male choir sang in falsetto, I was afraid that their vocal cords would burst.

The average foreigner can only appreciate the modern Japanese folk-songs. There is a large collection of beautiful songs of unrequited love which are very popular among the people. The army is

another subject of many of the modern songs, and long ballads are sung of heroism in Manchuria.

Press photographers with cameras and flash-light apparatus are always to be seen in the concert halls, rushing about as if they were at a political meeting, for Imperial princes and other prominent persons are among the audiences, and during the music flashlights blaze like meteors in the skies of the new epoch. The photographers are not thrown out, for the attributes of the twentieth century do not often upset the Japanese.

This state of things is reminiscent of the Japanese Maikiki Church, in Honolulu. Photographs may be taken during service, and the camera man sets up his tripod and lights his flare, while the congregation continues to pray undisturbed. But when the same man tries to take photographs on the other side of the cocoa palm avenue, in the "First Chinese Church of Christ," he is politely removed, for the Chinese *are* upset by the attributes of the twentieth century.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE SWORD THAT RULES THE FILM

THE twentieth century has allowed the Japanese to live again their middle age through the cinema, and when the Japanese wants to escape from glaring modernity, he can find solace in the world of the Japanese fighting-spirit films when he sees the virtues of his ancestors rise up from their graves.

In Tokyo's film street, where every building is a cinema, there are posters with gigantic coloured photographs of the stars and dramatic scenes from the film displayed at every entrance. Japan's history lives again on these façades, and sometimes a large flaming sword covers the front of one cinema, or two warriors' heads, or simply the head of a weeping woman. But the swords predominate, for in these eventful days the sword is the *matinée* idol of the people.

Between two historic heroes a good looking Tarzan may be jumping naked out of the jungle on to a crocodile's back, laughing down at the blonde head of Greta Garbo, his *vis-à-vis*. The heads of the Western stars look unfamiliar; for the Japanese the faces of Garbo, Barrymore and Bergner would lack character, and the poster-artist retouches their faces, as the Japanese photographer does his portraits, thereby suppressing their true personalities.

The Chinese use other methods, and when I saw the Garbo's head outside a Hongkong cinema, she had wrinkles at the side of her mouth and almond-shaped eyes.

An endless stream of people pass through the Asakusa from morning till night, the men in grey kimonos, the women in colour, and the children most brightly dressed of all. The clatter of their wooden sandals on the hard street blends with the music from the cinema doors. Flags displaying the titles of the films in large letters flutter in profusion in the glare of street-lights. Sometimes the names are written in Japanese characters on net flags and fly like dragons above the heads of the crowds.

As the people pass along on both sides of the streets, they often stop in front of one cinema trying to decide whether to go in. It is no easy decision, for the choice is so wide and the prices so cheap, seats can be had from five *sen*. The propaganda in the street is cleverly conceived and it dims their eyes. Who can withstand the power of a flaming sword as big as a rowing-boat? So I, too, reeled into a cinema.

A *samisen* orchestra accompanies the silent historical films and an announcer, who stands following the film like one of the audience, speaks the actors' parts out of the darkness. He follows the lip-movements of men, women and children and adjusts his voice accordingly. As I was at the last evening performance, the announcer was becoming hoarse.

The audience had their eyes fixed on the screen. Women clutched crumpled handkerchiefs, wrapt in another world. In these warrior-films Japan is again shut off from contemporary life. Japanese fight only Japanese; the clock has been put back a hundred years.

The Japanese landscape was unfolded before us in black and white. We could see silver lakes glinting in the light, dark islands and black trees. White steam

## THE SWORD THAT RULES THE FILM 111

rose out of a deep crater and rice fields basked in the sun. Suddenly the black silhouette of a Samurai overshadowed this peaceful picture. Two swords hung at his side, the long one for his enemy, the short one for himself; for the Japanese warrior is never taken alive. The excitement began when a speck could be seen on the horizon, gradually becoming bigger and bigger, till we could see that it was the enemy of our Samurai.

The two Japanese warriors were now face to face, staring silently with unwinking eyes and proud mouths. Only their fingers twitched, convulsively clutching their swords.

The moment they drew their swords with a lightning movement the scene became alive with other warriors jumping from behind bushes and rocks. There were about fifty of them, Japanese against Japanese, and if one was threatened in the back, he whipped round as if he had eyes there too. The Samurais' training in fencing, which lasted for years, was no ordinary one, for it taught them to concentrate their five senses on one thought, so that they learnt to feel the sword-point in their backs the instant before it was thrust.

The Samurai turned round with a sudden spring that repulsed his enemies for a yard or so; while he cut in two the man who had been about to kill him, the others had time to regain breath. Swords clashed. This catlike stratagem came off again and again; if he did it once, he did it five times until he had reduced his fifty enemies to ten.

In a short time they fled and disembowelled themselves.

Similar warriors attacked the Samurai on his way home through the countryside. When he finally reached his village, he found that his home had been



plundered of his goods and his loved ones. He knew at once that it was the work of these same enemies, and set out to find his young lover.

A steep coast on the ocean. A weeping girl was wandering under the steep cliffs, dressed in a light striped kimono, with her hair arranged in the old style, above her white, oval, classical Japanese face.

She strayed from one rock to another. Sometimes jumping down, and sometimes springing from stone to stone to keep her kimono from trailing in the sea. At other times she would be high up, where one false step meant certain death. She had been wandering on this coast for days, for every minute represented months, and her hair began to fly in the wind. Now she held a new born infant in her arms, her tears falling on its little face while she stood far above high rocks and the surging sea. She looked down hopelessly at the waves. Then a strong hand drew her back.

The Samurai had at last found his lover. He laughed and wept with joy, but she no longer wept but only laughed shrilly. She was mad. She handed him the child, and even as he bent down to see the first smile on his first-born's lips, the waves were surging over the woman's head.

The Samurai, still wearing his two swords in his belt, and with the child in his arms, looked down dumbly at the waves. They soon surged over his head too.

The *Samisen* orchestra burst into jazz, for the second film on the programme was more modern.

Two marriages seemed to be going awry! In one the husband was too Westernised and the wife too conservative, in the other the situation was reversed. After an hour of complications the husbands and wives reached a compromise and the film closed with a happy ending.

The third film was at last a sound film. It was concerned with the problems which Western civilisation have brought to Japan, the problems of the middle-class youth who are still undergoing wedekindian trials.

A "modern boy" had fallen in love with a "modern girl." When the girl's father found his daughter in the boy's flat, he shot her, whereupon the boy came out of his hiding place and shot the father. The youthful murderer then became a haunted wanderer of the night. Homeless and at the end of his strength, he fled to a friend's house. The friend forgave him and the murderer wept on his breast. Later he gave himself up to the authorities and was acquitted.

The films were not directed properly and the stories were drawn out to appalling length with streams of dialogue. But that did not seem to disturb my neighbours who must have been paragons of patience. The great fault of all film producers is also committed by Japanese directors. They do not stick to realities, and their players are not true types. The sets in the films are always ultra-modern milieus where the Japanese would like to live but will never see in all their life. A foreigner is particularly struck by the absence of mimicry and gesticulation. The gamut of passions is never expressed with more than a nervous twitching of the lips, and kissing does not exist. In love scenes two heads nestle together and tears fall, and one comes away from the Asakusa cinemas with the impression that the sons of one of the manliest nations in the world weep more than any of their fellow men.

But if the photography of Japanese films is considered by itself, all the faults are forgotten. Every picture is a feast for the eye and even the most prosaic scenes are filled with poetry.

The educational films are the most beautifully photographed of all. They enlighten the people and they pulsate with the force of Japanese life. The possibilities of expansion are pointed out in a lovely series of pictures, showing an immense landscape of cherry blossom. Suddenly a volcano erupts: "Strengthen your spirit. . . . That is the fate of the Japanese."

The young Japanese intellectuals do not often frequent the *Asakusa* for its cinemas cater for provincial tastes; but provincials are typical of the Japanese taste as a whole.

The cinemas outside the *Ginza* district show American films principally. Two hundred and fifty films are imported annually from Hollywood, and while the Japanese film predominates in the suburbs and the provinces, American productions are more popular in the better quarters of the large towns. These films teach the youth about the latest developments of Western civilisation, and pleasure is a secondary consideration. They are also useful as a means of giving English lessons to those who cannot go abroad. But the *mogas* find them useful for showing the latest Hollywood fashions.

A Japanese exporter, for instance, became rich indirectly through American films. Whenever he went to the cinema he took a sketchbook with him and whenever he saw something new in lamps or vases or mirrors or other Hollywood fantasies, he made a rough drawing, and before the American manufacturer had realised the commercial value of a certain article, the exporter's factory girls would be turning it out with mass production. When, for example, the film *Goin' to Town* is shown in Bombay, the fashionable Indian woman will be able to find

in the shops exact copies of the powder puff which she admired so much in Mae West's boudoir.

There were shoes everywhere; the shoes of the star, the technical workers, the directors, the wardrobe attendants, and the operators. Small white women's slippers, Paris models, Russian riding boots, Japanese clogs, all lay scattered over the floor, and I had to pick my way through them before I could enter the studio. I had to put on leather slippers, but even those had to be discarded soon afterwards, for in the rooms laid with straw mats one must walk in stockinged soles.

The first room was packed with men, women and children lying like the victims of a film battle on the clean matting. This was the supers' waiting room.

In the studios the men wore white masks over their mouths as if they had toothache, but it was only to avoid swallowing dust. Faces of visitors who were not allowed in were pressed against the panes of glass of the apparatus room, otherwise the studio looked like any other. The Japanese were very proud that microphone, cameras, lighting apparatus and all other requisites were "made in Japan." Only two words have been imported into these studios from America; "okay," and "all-right." As in every other studio the stars' names were printed on the backs of their chairs.

But the star's room is certainly different in Japanese film studios. When I was introduced to the famous Yoshiko Kawada she was sitting on thin silk cushions on the straw matted floor of her dressing room. Apart from the mirror the *hibachi* was the only piece of furniture and this she used as an ash-tray. She was smoking a cigarette at the end of a long holder. Yoshiko Kawada, who did not speak English, had

had her eyes painted to look level, like so many of her colleagues, which was a pity, for the slanting eyes of the Japanese add greatly to their charm. However the gold chrysanthemums which decorated the light violet silk of her kimono made her scintillate.

Iryie Takako is the Japanese Garbo, and she is not only the prettiest and most popular actress of Japan, she is one of the world's beautiful women.

I saw her play in the old Japanese films. Her kimono hid the contours of her figure, but her narrow, tender face and her liquid eyes had a cold fascination. She is one of the few Japanese actresses who can wear low-cut evening dresses when playing modern parts, and look convincing. She has a soft, caressing voice, and a laugh like the sound of bells in a Buddhist temple.

While I was sitting opposite her in a corner of the studio, she was dressed in men's clothes à la Marlene Dietrich, but she was even more shy than the ordinary Japanese girl. Every word had to be squeezed out of her, and when she did speak she lowered her eyes and talked in a low voice.

The daughter of an aristocrat, she originally intended to be an artist, but chance led her to the film studio, and to-day, at twenty-five, she is star, author, and producer of her own company. Few years ago Hollywood made her an offer to play the part of Madame Butterfly, but she was too attached to her own country, and she refused. She married a fellow-actor some time later and now he is her manager. She will act on the films for five years more at the longest, and then she will settle down to be a good wife, which is the highest ideal and most natural duty of every good Japanese woman, even should she happen to be a famous film star.

When I left, she asked me to remember her to Anna Sten and Brigitte Helm, her favourites. She went to the door with me and bowed three times. I felt embarrassed to be treated so respectfully by a so beautiful woman.

A scenario writer at the largest Japanese film company, Shochiku (which means pines and bamboos), told me his troubles. He lived in dread of becoming a melancholic, for he had to keep on writing film stories full of tragedy and tears. Box office success is impossible without tears, and the women specially are disappointed if they do not cry. So, as fifty per cent of the cinema audiences are composed of women, there must be some tragedy even in comedies. I could not help sympathising with him when he told me that Japanese scenario writers have to write even more stories than the poets of the American screen.

Although Japan sends practically no films abroad, the studios are kept more than busy, for they have to supply all the many million cinema-goers of the provinces who are not interested in foreign productions, with all their films.

As I left the Shochiku studio large yellow motor buses set down about sixty *geishas*. They were going to act as supers in a film, and could not be represented by ordinary actors, for their coiffures, which take days to arrange, and the cost of making up supers to play these rôles for a few hours in the studio would cost thousands.

I stumbled up against a willow when I came into the open. Its long branches hung sadly over a pond. Tree and pond are the inevitable background for love scenes in Japanese films which are seldom more vital than the melancholy setting itself.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE HONOURED MOON

THE mournfulness of their willows and the loneliness of their lakes pervades the Japanese arts. As a nation they are as hard as a smooth sword, but individually they are as gentle as the cherry blossom, searching always for knowledge and beauty.

I once watched some Japanese standing before a silk picture of a single blade of grass drawn in with a few lines. They gazed for twenty minutes without saying a word, lost in deep admiration.

One day I visited a painting class at the Imperial Academy of Art. The atmosphere was quite different from that of our schools. None of the students used bright colour or made bold brush strokes, but they seemed to be painting nature with the awed respect that they show when they stand before it.

The class-room was like a flower-garden. The students sat at low tables on each of which stood a vase of blooming flowers. But the flowers in the students' pictures were not plain copies; their beauty was suggested and, as it were, breathed into the pictures.

At an evening class they were painting the moon. But here again they neither painted a yellow spot nor a realistic moon. They created something much more tender on their silk scrolls. A student explained their methods to me. When he paints he thinks, "Honoured moon, forgive me for being so bold as







to paint you. My picture of you is only a modest mark of my respect for you, the sign of my devotion."

These gracious Japanese artists lose their fine feeling, however, when they work in the style of Europeans, and unfortunately, thanks to the increasing number of buildings in the Western style, the demand for pictures of European pattern is growing. In the representative exhibitions luckless copies of European pictures are crowding out the lovely Japanese water colours.

When the Japanese are showing their devotion to Nature in their pictures, it is characteristic that they use their rich colour-scale with restraint, but the further they depart from nature, as for instance in the theatre, their passion for colour breaks through and rules supreme.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE THEATRE OF THE MOTLEY GIANTS

THE streets glowed in garish lights, and the small Japanese parchment lanterns compared strangely with the modern arc lamps. The Kabukiza Theatre looked like a fairy castle in the festive light, and the gaily-clad crowds confirmed the romance of the scene. The theatre was built of European material, but the style was entirely Japanese, curved roofs crowning the stone structure. Next to the theatre stood a huge wooden hoarding, higher than a two-storeyed house, and surmounted with a narrow roof to keep the rain off the bright lettering which announced the names of the actors. It was like a lovely drop-scene. The whole was framed with small flowers and scale-like geometrical figures which were the family crests of the cast.

The performance lasted from four to eleven, and it must be experienced before one can be said to have seen the most decorative scene painting in the world.

At the stage door girls were waiting for Shocho, a famous woman impersonator, and when he arrived they surrounded the lithe actor and asked for autographs.

A quarter of an hour later he was sitting in the theatre bath, almost suffocated with steam. The hot water opened his pores and when he sprang out he

looked like a well boiled lobster. He was immediately dried down and massaged.

When he went into his dressing-room, I sat down beside him on the mats, while he looked into his mirror, stripped to the waist. A dozen assorted brushes hung over glowing charcoal, some as small as paint brushes, others as thick as shaving brushes. Three dressers knelt at his side waiting for orders.

His long narrow head and finely cut features were quite English, and I could discover almost no Mongol traits in his face. This forty-year-old man, who only played feminine roles, was greying at the temples.

His hands sped rapidly on their work of changing his ego, and while he worked the assistants waved paper fans printed with his name.

Shocho's fingers glided like lightning over arms, neck and face, covering them a dead white, leaving only his dark brown eyes sharply dark, as if they were two spots he had forgotten.

Only his ivory-coloured teeth remained, and these he painted a deep black. He coloured even his back teeth with dark bark juice, for sixty years ago all Japanese married women had black teeth, and Shocho was about to play the part of a princess of that epoch.

The make-up finished, the three assistants set to work and pulled on white, pink and scarlet underclothes and on top of these the magnificent kimono of a Japanese princess. Then they wound the *obi*, a sash twelve feet long and about four inches wide, round his hips and placed two little sandbags on his breast. Brocades and silks were arranged on his shoulders in layers to give the sloping effect which is particularly prized by beautiful Japanese women.

Two dressers then pulled a rich black wig over his grey hair, decorated on the top with two silver ribbons.

The astounding transformation was then complete, and Shocho had become a magnificent woman in court dress, although he looked ghastly, especially when standing behind the scenes with other men who were made up in the same way. They did not speak to each other, but smiled as only men-women can smile, and moved their heads like women, practising for their entrance.

Shocho went on followed by a festive procession. The ladies of his court gathered round him and he tripped along in the same way as conservative *geishas*, casting the longing eyes of a woman in love in the direction of the audience. Whispers passed down the rows of seats, the men smiled, and the women put their heads together in admiration of the great artist. What beauty he put into the impersonation and how nobly and effeminately he spoke! What natural beauty he put into the unnatural!

He looked like someone from another world, and although I heard him speak in feminine tones, it was obviously only the mincing voice of a man who was taking immense pains to speak like a woman.

But I was not just in a theatre—I was in a theatre town! I could hardly believe my eyes when I saw a plan of the building in the programme. There were fifteen different restaurants, some of them Japanese and others Chinese and European. There were four tea salons, six ladies' drawing-rooms, four smoking-rooms, ten stalls selling souvenirs, and a

studio where one could be photographed during an interval and call for the pictures at the end of the next act. Attendants walked about the building as if to read from the women's eyes whether they were suffering from *migraine* or wanted to suckle a child. There was a theatre exhibition on one floor showing portraits of famous actors of the past and, what was even more interesting, silk masks, which had really been taken on the actors' faces; their muses seemed to live on in the fantasy of these grotesque coloured masks.

Young women in uniform kimonos acted as guides in the exhibition and told the foreign visitors about the history of the Japanese theatre. They told us of the angry Goddess of the Sun who could only be reconciled by the Goddess Uzume, who sang and danced so long in front of the cave of the Goddess of the Sun that she at length came out herself and joined in the merrymaking. This was how light was brought to the earth and how dancing was given to the world.

The religious dance created on Japanese soil and celebrated in honour of the Sun Goddess was the beginning of the old Japanese *No* drama which is still the theatre of the aristocracy and the upper classes. The *No* stages are for the members of certain *No* schools who may take guests, and some wealthy aristocrats still have private *No* stages in their homes.

The costly coloured fans and wooden masks of the thousand year old Japanese art of acting were presented by *No* and are to-day national treasures.

There was room for three thousand in the auditorium. The straw mat system was only maintained in

one row of boxes and the rest of the audience sat in chairs.

On my right a family was sitting without their shoes in one of these boxes. Although the husband wore European clothes, his wife and children wore kimonos. The two little girls with their bobbed hair, powdered faces and painted lips were as proud as peacocks, and seemed an integral part of the whole proceeding. They behaved like grown-ups, waving their gold fans, being given powder for their faces, and smiling confidently on all sides.

A wooden gangway about three feet wide led up from the back of the theatre to the stage, slightly above the spectators' heads. This was called the *hanamichi*, the flower bridge. The great actors made their ceremonial entrances and exits over this platform which heightened the effect of the processions.

The platform was widened with a ramp, and on both sides there were rows of concealed lights which lit the actor from beneath, as he stood in the midst of the spectators.

The *hanamichi* also brought additional life to the actual performance. When, for instance, a robber band was attacking a lonely girl on the stage, her rescuer would appear at the back of the theatre and stalk slowly along the flower bridge. He was not supposed to know what was happening on the stage, but the audience could see the exciting approach of both parties. A scene of this kind could never be so thrilling on the films.

Large white candles burned close together on the stage.

The play began.

It started like a funeral. Artificial winds made the candle flames leap up. Every flame smoked like a factory chimney, and the air smelt of burning candles mixed with the scent of the camellia wax in the women's hair.

Black-swathed figures then ran along the platform, pulled down the curtain quickly with shouts and carried it off to the wings on their shoulders. A pink cherry blossom landscape was then illuminated on the empty stage. No one appeared and the candles burned on.

Musicians dressed in fantastic costumes sat on narrow platforms on either side of the empty stage. They sang the prologue and explained the development of the play in an unpleasant falsetto, of higher pitch than is ever heard in Europe. They strained their throats and their veins swelled out in the effort. The guitar accompanists seemed far more in keeping with the scene.

The singers announced Yasuna, a classical dance, in one act. Yasuna is robbed of his love. He sets out to find her and loses his reason. Kikugoro, the great Kikugoro, was going to dance the part.

The scene was still deserted, and the candles still burned. Artificial flowers had been arranged along the *hanamichi*. Suddenly, right at the back in the darkness where the raised platform began, there was bright movement.

Everyone turned round. A group of players was dancing quickly in the direction of the stage. In the surprise of the first moment of their entry I could not see details, but when they reached the middle of the platform they slowed down and I could see that two more black-swathed figures were running backwards,



and that on the points of the two long curving bamboo sticks which they waved to and fro over the heads of the audience, sat two large coloured butterflies.

The first figures were followed by two similar shadow figures who were chasing the butterflies with flaming candles hung at the end of their staves.

And in the middle, between the two butterflies which teased and confused him, Kikugoro, the amorous astronomer, danced a dance of yearning for his stolen love.

Meanwhile on the stage, the orchestra played and the singers sang, but no one looked at them. All eyes were turned on Kikugoro, who was still dancing on the *hanamichi*.

It was impossible to see whether Kikugoro was wearing a man's or a woman's mask.

His face and neck were chalk-white. Only his eyes showed life. His smooth black hair fell nearly half-way down his back, and a large lilac band, the sign of his soul's mourning, was tied in a bow on his right brow.

Finely shaped flowers covered the light pink blouse of his kimono, and when he used his fan the arms of the kimono danced with him, flying into fantastic shapes. What seemed to be a pleated skirt of light blue silk was tied round his waist and embroidered with yellow, gold and green leaves and flowers. Then I saw that it was not a skirt but wide trousers, with legs twice as long as his own, making him look like a giant sliding on his knees. The light-blue trouser-legs flowed behind him like a train and the light glittered on the many bright flowers on his costume.

This gorgeous dress has never been worn in ordinary life. It is one of the many costumes of the *Kabuki*

which carries the people into the realm of fantasy by exaggerating reality.

Not one of the dancer's movements is violent, for the dance is ceremonial.

Kikugoro stood stock still upright with the fire-red kimono of his loved one on his right shoulder. He held it for some minutes. There was complete silence. Suddenly he turned round, no small feat in those trousers, for each leg had to be lifted high enough not to allow the long trouser-leg to fall straight in front of him at the completion of his turn, and so he danced on to the stage.

Once on the stage, he sought his loved one among the cherry blossom, holding his gold fans in his right hand and the kimono of his loved one in the left.

There was a flash of lightning and a roar of thunder and five fearful figures sprang on to the scene. The bombastic and grotesque make-up of the *Kabuki* was shown at its best on their faces, striped red and blue. They danced round Kikugoro, barring every way of escape. These were the robbers who had stolen his bride.

The five monsters tore the red kimono out of his arms; gave it back to him, only to snatch it away again. Then Kikugoro broke down. He lay for some minutes on the ground without moving. Then he began to dance again, working up to the last Dance of Despair, trying to find a way out, but all in vain.

The five fiends always stood grinning in his way. Kikugoro fled, dancing, to the highest peak in the cherry blossom landscape.

Kikugoro had triumphed, for the five fiends had disappeared. He threw the kimono round his shoulders like a woman and arched his back. His face and

neck were dead white, and there was not a flicker on his face. Was he feeling pain, pleasure, or despair? Then his eyes rolled round in his white face, wild and staring. They were the eyes of a maniac. Kikugoro had lost his reason.

The maniac stood with the red kimono on the hill top against the cherry blossom landscape. He remained there until the stage hands had pulled the brown and green striped curtain from either side of the stage. Then all the candles flickered out.

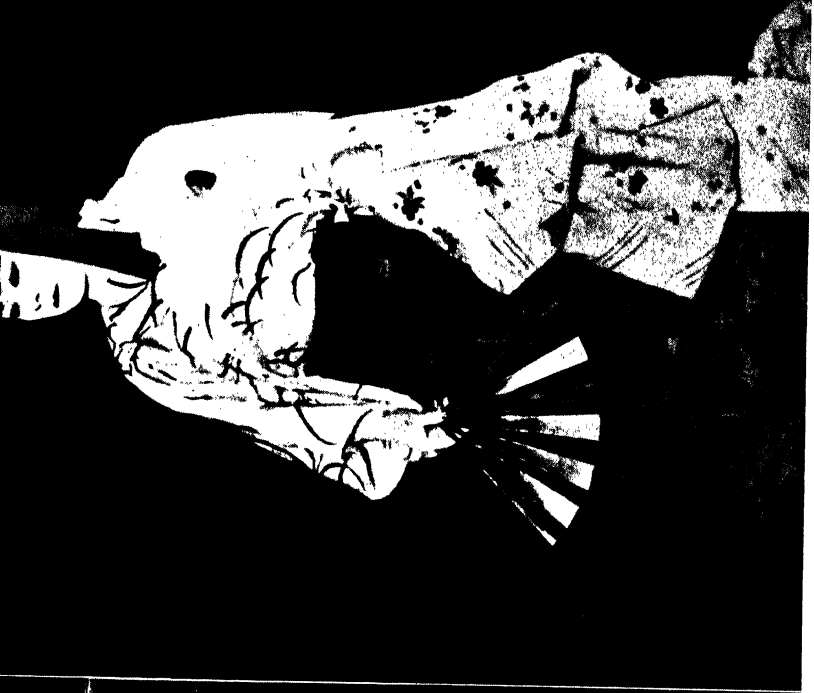
Kanjincho, a classical drama in one act was the next piece. The time was Japan, seven hundred and fifty years ago. The chorus told the plot. Prince Yoshitsune had fled with five trusted soldiers, disguised as priests, before the suspicion of his brother Prince Yoritomo. On the pretext of collecting money for a new temple in Nara, they had reached the frontier of their country.

Then the play began.

Togashi was the frontier guard at Ataka, the Prince's home. White seagulls decorated the blue brocade of his glorious uniform, on his head he wore a tall black bishop's mitre, and in his hand gay fans. A warrior carried his sword as he entered with a large following.

The frontier guard looked like a pyramid. His costume seemed to have been made for a giant, and hands and face looked tiny in the great pyramid of brocade. His numerous followers sat stiff and silent on the ground like a group of Buddhas.

Togashi had orders to arrest the prince. Of course he suspected the priests and examined them in Buddhism.



IRIE—JAPANESE GARRO



The orchestra which was in the background, prepared the way for the first excitement with increased rhythm of drum, flutes, singing and *samisen*.

Benkey, the prince's first man, was also a pyramid of black and white brocade. The height and breadth of his costume were cleverly proportioned. In his vast coverings of brocade the warrior priest was as broad as the Dubarry in her crinolines, and I wondered how he was physically capable of carrying the weight.

Benkey parried the guard's questions brilliantly, but the suspicious Togashi wanted to see the donation list and the subscriptions for the Nara temple. Benkey at once read the names from a blank roll.

As soon as Togashi wanted to inspect the blank roll, the sparks began to fly.

At that instant, the warrior's face distorted into a terrible grimace, and he folded up the roll and whirled round like a great pyramid of brocade revolving on its own axis.

Delirium broke out in the gallery, and the tension of the players grew with the spectators' excitement. Inarticulate hisses could be heard from above. This was applause. They were beside themselves with excitement although everyone knew what was going to happen.

A duel of words followed. The giants stood face to face. Togashi began and Benkey parried. It was an enthralling struggle.

They began softly. Then they drew together, crouching slightly, and breathing deeply. They parried as long as their breath lasted, pulling themselves up and gasping, their voices rising and falling rhythmically.

When they had almost no breath left, they stood face to face, almost, but not quite, touching, crouching, but never closing. They drew in breath deeply, and the dialogue rose and fell with the same rhythm. Again they stood face to face, breathless, only to recoil once more.

This was repeated about five times, until the gallery could no longer contain itself. A barking hiss broke out softly. Srrhhhhrrrrroooooo, srrhhhhhhooooo, srrhhhhhhoooooooo.

The gallery was growling "Koshiro" to show its appreciation to the actor in the rôle of Benkey, the great actor Matsumoto Koshiro.

At length the aged Benkey convinced the frontier guard of his business. The guard apologised and had gifts brought round, and gave the priests rice wine.

Benkey grew a little drunk and danced a dance in honour of Togashi. His movements were sudden and brusque, brutal and pathetic. This was the dance of an old warrior. The orchestra howled its deafening accompaniment.

The singers were straining at their throats again and to increase the effect, two blocks of wood were banged rhythmically together behind the scenes. The orchestra was making up for its past quietness with a torrent of noise.

The great Kikugoro in the lesser rôle of the Prince Yoshitsune disguised as a servant, was sitting at the side of the stage where servants sit, as immobile as a pillar.

Throughout the performance, nearly every five minutes, the black-swathed servants came on to arrange the principal's costume. As soon as the leading actor had finished speaking for a moment,

he retired at once to a corner of the stage and with his back to the audience, powdered his face and arranged his make-up. The spectators did not allow themselves to be disturbed by this in the slightest.

At last Benkey and his followers were permitted to pass on.

Benkey bowed three or four times to the guard to express his thanks. His departure was a splendid ceremony. They marched off over the *hanamichi* doing the goose-step, and were halfway along the platform, going toward freedom, when the frontier guard suddenly called them back.

The prince had been recognised by his well-known gait.

At this dramatic moment, fifty men were standing on the platform and on the stage. Each looked like an idol, their lips pursed for fear of betraying emotion.

Benkey's turn had come again. One false move would mean death for him and his men. He cudgelled the disguised prince over his head and across his shoulders, upbraiding him for his miserable similarity to Prince Yoshitsune.

The frontier-guard was not to be deceived again. He knew now that the man who was being beaten was Prince Yoshitsune. But now something had happened which made everything else unimportant. A Japanese warrior had raised his hand against his lord and master. Still, Benkey had only done it to save him, he had only struck the prince when hard pressed. The chivalrous heart of Togashi was moved by Benkey's heroic loyalty. He let them pass on, and went off with his following.

Prince Yoshitsune and his five faithful men were left alone on the stage. The great Kikugoro now had



an opportunity to speak. He deplored the tragic fate of being a homeless wanderer, harried on all sides.

Yoshitsune, the prince, wept. Benkey, the warrior, wept, although even as a child he had never cried. The prince wept over the heroism of his knight, and Benkey wept because he had struck his master.

The prince took over the leadership of the little group and they went out ceremoniously over the *hanamichi* across the rows of spectators. Benkey went last and as he stepped off the empty stage on to the platform, he halted.

The audience hissed out his name hysterically. All eyes were turned on his face. With wonderful mimicry and symbolic movements, he recounted, without speaking a word, what had happened on the stage. When he waved his right arm through the air four times, everyone knew that Benkey was telling them of the seas and mountains which he and his followers had had to cross during their mournful wanderings. When he smiled roguishly, they knew that the great old man was thinking of the clever lies he had told to the frontier guard. In a few moments the story had been told on his face, like a silent film.

Then his little eyes flared up devilishly, and the orchestra filled the silence with a wild chord. Wooden cymbals were knocked rhythmically together, narrow fingers plucked nervously at the *samisen* strings, small hand drums were beaten with finger tips. Koshiro crouched down to spring, and leaped like a giant dark cloud, like a magnificent and exotic flying-god over the heads of the audience, landing on the middle of the narrow platform. There were a few more moments of

breathless silence. The deafening music struck up again. He sprang a second time, and a third, which brought him to the exit.

Mournfulness descended on the audience, for they all saw in this play the history of their country. They had learned at school how long the arms of the powerful Yoritomo were. Yoshitsune had fled, after a few years of restless wandering, before the wrath of his brother to freedom in suicide. This fate was expressed throughout the evening by Kikugoro's white-smeared face.

To get to Kikugoro's dressing-room one had to cross the revolving stage, turned by man power. I was invited to go in. He was playing four parts that day; a robber chief, a courtesan, the astronomer Yasuna, and the exiled Prince Yoshitsune. This elderly, lovable man looked very different in front of his looking glass. He is over fifty, but a *Kabuki* actor is not supposed to have reached the height of his career until he is sixty.

Kikugoro is not unlike Charles Laughton in appearance. A young man who wrote plays of the classical type for him was sitting in the room. These authors play an important part in the Japanese theatre, and they have to explain the interpretation of their works to the actors, make sketches for the *décors*, compose posters, and prepare the programmes.

The position of the great actors is even more impressive in society. The public calls them by their first names and Kikugoro is seldom known by his full name Kikugoro Onoye.

In the history of the Japanese theatre he is known as Kikugoro the Sixth, for he is the sixth member of a famous actor family.

Kikugoro, like all *Kabuki* actors, is a staunch upholder of the Japanese family system, and he rules his dramatic pupils with a rod of iron. He is engaged by the theatre with his troupe and the members of the cast act round him, the leader, the star, and paymaster, their minor parts.

Kikugoro receives a monthly salary of three to four thousand dollars, an enormous sum in Japan. He uses his own discretion as regards the company's salaries and pays them out of his own pocket. His eighteen-year-old son goes to the Keio University in the morning, and in the early afternoon plays women's parts with his father, in a shrill falsetto. He will one day become the seventh Kikugoro and head of the clan.

Kikugoro has outwardly Westernised himself. He wears European clothes in private life, and looks a typical man of the world. He plays golf and baseball and is a keen hunter. As he is president of a Japanese Dramatic Academy, his social and artistic responsibilities are very great.

But in spite of his busy life, he has a stage for acting and dancing in his home. There he trains his favourite pupils, and himself studies the delicate women's dances which first made him famous. His costly kimonos are stored in several little houses which stand in the garden of his villa.

## CHAPTER XV

### THE WESTERN THEATRE IN THE JAPANESE MELTING POT

KOSHIRO, Kikugoro and the other great classical actors of Japan are perhaps the last representatives of their art, for although the conservative middle classes cling to the classical theatre, the younger generation does not enthuse over *Kabuki*. The reason may be that owing to the costliness of the production the entrance prices are too high for students and all young people, but certainly some of the young Japanese have only been to the classical theatre once in their lives, and many not at all.

The young generation feels that the classical drama is too firmly bound by tradition and has reached a *cul-de-sac* of formalism. It has nothing of interest to offer to the youth of the country and for many of them it has become a curiosity, which will in time disappear, as they told me, with the other remnants of feudal times. Young Japan thinks that a contemporary theatre will have to be evolved if dramatic art wants to keep its niche in modern life.

The desertion a few years ago of the most promising young *Kabuki* students, who founded modern dramatic schools and revolutionised the theatre by playing with women, was a symptom of the imminent fate of the classical drama. *Kabuki* began to die with the coming of the Western theatre. It no longer holds its position as the pre-eminent theatre for the people, but it may live on under the patronage of the small section of

the public that still leans towards tradition. Everything modern is adopted in Japan, even things that are not necessarily required, in case anything valuable might slip through, and this principle also applies in the world of the Japanese theatre. *No* drama, *Kabuki* and the marionette theatre, were overrun by the modern movement. But to-day the Japanese are beginning to recover from the first shock of the impact with the new world.

From the artistic point of view, the modern Japanese theatre has not done anything worthy of notice, but the spirit behind merits consideration. The thirst for knowledge, prestige, and racial pride are the chief factors now, when the theatre is coming to the end of a period of storm and stress.

The production in 1909 of Ibsen's *John Gabriel Borkmann* was the beginning of the influx of the Western theatre. Soon afterwards modern theatre groups grew up, and two years later *Hamlet* was successfully performed for the first time in Japan. But the movement did not become important until after the great earthquake. The theatre of the advance guard, the Tsukiji-Shogekijo, was founded, and in its first six years a hundred and seventeen plays were produced. The works of Gogol, Gorki, Strindberg, Hauptmann, Wedekind, Molnar, Pirandello, Capek, Schnitzler, Maeterlinck, and Bernard Shaw were introduced to the Japanese public.

In 1930, when the wave of Marxism first lapped on Japan's shores, the theatre of the advance guard became the home of the proletarian drama. It fought for the ideals of the proletariat, but when, in the following year, the army conquered Manchuria, the national enthusiasm blotted out the theatre of

the Left. The courageous little theatre fell a victim to social boycott. A detective stood behind the scenes every evening, and when anything was said or done that did not seem to him to fit in with the new ideals, the curtain was rung down. For a long time now this theatre has been closed for economic reasons.

1935 and 1936 brought a new crisis to the Japanese theatre. The new establishment of naval treaties and the advance of the army on North China had their repercussions. Suddenly no one wanted foreign drama. The modern Japanese drama was called for, and it won all along the line.

These new plays are not important artistically. The technique is European, as is the *décor*, and the only difference is that the milieu is Japanese and the problems presented are the problems of modern Japanese life.

The public's patience is surprising. It is not uncommon for extracts of seven plays to be given at one performance. One and two act plays are the fashion. Not much store is laid by the dramatic treatment of these plays, but much is made of moments of tension.

The Japanese theatre is ruled to the point of exploitation by the capitalist system. Nearly all the modern theatres are owned by the Shochiku-Concern. The Kabukiza, which takes the place of a state theatre, as well as music halls and nearly all the film studios, belong to the concession, and of course, the artistic development of all these houses is subject to the business interests of this commercial syndicate. The young Japanese writers maintain that this organisation is anarchistic, and they demand vigorously a redistribution of the theatre managements.

Modern Western dancing alone holds out against the offensive of the nationalist movement in the theatre. It even does more; it is gaining ground. Dancers are the only Western artists with a good box office. Harald Kreutzberg never fails to include Japan on a world tour, and here he finds the public which owes him more than any other, for the imitators of Kreutzberg in Japan are legion.

In Tokyo alone there are thirty dancers with their own groups, and an exhibition is given almost every evening. More interested spectators could not be found, women and young girls predominating.

There is nothing original in these exhibitions. Europeans can only be interested in old and new Japanese style dances, for their deep symbolism expresses the soul of the country.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE GIRLS' OPERA

A NEW form has resulted from the moulding of the American musical comedy and the Japanese theatre. The girls' opera is something that never existed before. The idea of the musical comedy and its whole structure was changed. The revue theatre became a home for the convent girl, who was allowed to dance half-naked and act the coquette on the stage, but nowhere else.

The first time I went to the Takarazuka Theatre in Tokyo, one of the scenes was set in the Japanese Navy in celebration of the anniversary of the victory over the Russian fleet. A conglomeration of fifteen American dance tunes screeched out, and on a drum-beat as loud as the firing of a torpedo, the curtain rolled aside. Pretty girls dressed as fantastic sailors danced on the deck of a Japanese warship. Each carried a rifle which they levelled at the women and children in the stalls while they continued to dance over the stage.

After this patriotic scene Viennese girls came on. The orchestra played the Blue Danube and there were scenes of Vienna and Salzburg. Once again girls played all the parts whether they were mothers, fathers or lovers. Dark-haired girls in knicker-bockers and horn-rimmed spectacles, or frock-coats and top-hats of the early eighteenth century tripped about the stage, dancing waltzes and singing songs of the Prater in Japanese.



There was a naïve little sketch of Anni taking leave of her friend Emil at the boarding house of the Viennese Academy of Music before returning to her home at Salzburg. When she arrived in Salzburg, where her parents ran an Opera House, she felt unhappy. After studying in Vienna the little Opera House seemed nothing but a show-booth. So she returned to Vienna, soon to become a star and marry Emil.

The girl who played the part of her father spoke in a deep voice and said her lines in Japanese with a Tyrolean accent. The Austrian atmosphere was really brought out with these charming little effects, and when I, a foreigner sitting in the tenth row, looked into their eyes, made up like Europeans', saw their short hair, and heard the names, Mizzi, Frizzi, Poldi, and Anni, it almost seemed as if I was actually in Vienna and Salzburg. But Mizzi, Frizzi, and Poldi were in fact, Ashiko, Kuniko and Mikako.

The audience did not care whether the Viennese Academy of Music had a boarding house or not, or whether an opera house at Salzburg could look like a show-booth, for certainly not as many as one per cent. of them had been there. The rest were prepared to believe that Vienna and Salzburg were just as the girls' opera made them out to be.

The auditorium was as gaily decorated as the stage. I was reminded of a family resort. The atmosphere was not forced, for this was not the exalted *Kabukiza*. The women wore kimonos and the majority of the men were in European clothes. Many parents had brought their children, and when the next act began and the stage shone with white and silver, the mothers hushed their children in the dark auditorium.

The revue went on; a fantastic treatment of European and American ideas "made in Japan." We saw in turn a *valse d'amour*, Frau Sorge, London, Berlin, New York. Every number had some superficial likeness to the country and town represented, but fundamentally they were Japanese stories acted in foreign costume. The further each act was removed from Western ideas the more impressive they were. Then the show expanded into a new kind of revue. Flowers, animals, and children played the principal parts.

An isolated birch stood on the empty stage, a strong wind waving its branches. A branch fell to the ground, revealing itself as a dancer in a close-fitting dress like birch bark. She danced listlessly, fell down choking in some fern, and died. Two cockchafers, as big as men, crawled by; they danced round the withered branch and covered it up with a green nut tree leaf. Curtain!

Twelve girls came on, dressed as men in evening dress, and washed celluloid babies in little bath tubs. This was modern propaganda for child welfare on the stage!

After a Bee's Wedding, the saxophones and violins moaned into silence. The old Japanese music struck up to underline an orphan girl's love for her doll, Mihamaru Sama.

When I went round to visit the girls in their dressing-rooms they were gone. I was told that they were already in the Takarazuka night express.

Takarazuka, the spa for the two large sister towns of Osaka and Kobe, lies mid-way between them, and an electric railway connects the three towns. The company which owns the railway also manages

the mineral springs, the zoological gardens, the amusement parks, the hotels and even the girls' opera, which only fills temporary engagements in Tokyo.

The Takarazuka girls' opera is the invention of the chairman of the electric railway company, Ishiso Kobayashi. He started a little summer theatre with twelve young girls for the entertainment of visitors, in 1913, when Japan was not yet so liberally minded about the stage. Kobayashi did not allow men to play the male parts in case the artistes might be distracted from their work by playing love scenes. His Amazon theatre was something of a sensation, for till that time the position had been reversed, only men being allowed to act the parts of both sexes.

But a millionaire's hobby became a great money-making concern. The convent principle, the family system, originally thought out for twelve girls, developed into a tyranny over six hundred and thirty. They had to live in a pension attached to the theatre, played in four different theatres and had to go to a school run by the company. This revue-girl convent is a typical example of the two sides of Japanese capitalism. On the one hand Kobayashi gives the public magnificent performances for the small price of thirty sen—five pence. But on the other hand the actors in this successful undertaking are exploited in the cleverest way.

A thousand girls of twelve apply annually for entrance into the "Music School" Takarazuka. Only a hundred of that number get as far as being tested, and only half of these are accepted. The parents have to sign the contracts of the successful entrants, and they pledge their children for nine years to the company, body and soul.

The future Prima Donnas start on a five-year course, during which the parents have to pay fifteen yen board money to the management. The girls bring in no money for the first year. Training begins at nine o'clock every morning. The girls learn ethics, Japanese literature, geography, English, music, modern dancing, Japanese dancing and ballet. After the first year they still have to study, but they are allowed to appear in the chorus. If they are particularly pretty and talented they are given leading parts during their fifth year. So during the second half of their training years the company is drawing profit from their services. When their training period is over the young actresses sign up for another four years. Though she may be reproduced larger than life-size on the hoardings, and though she may receive thousands of requests for her autograph and thousands of letters of appreciation, the great star will still not be earning a fabulous salary, but only pin money.

The pupils may only marry during their nine years of contract if they pay a large sum in compensation. Nor may they accept engagements at any other theatre all their life, for the railway company does not intend to invest money in training girls for other managers. A few exceptions are made to this rule in the case of film contracts only.

How does a Takarazuka star live? The foreign critic will reply, "wretchedly," but the Takarazuka management will say, "splendidly."

At six in the evening she is a star. At eight she is still amid clouds of applause, in evening dress, a man's tail coat, or half-naked. But by nine o'clock she is a prim girl in a uniform consisting of a green pleated skirt and a striped kimono blouse.

In Takarazuka there is no evening performance as there is during the Tokyo engagements, and the girls have to spend their evenings in the school boarding-house. They may not go out with men in the evening nor go to dance halls. Lights are put out in the dormitories punctually at nine-thirty, and at ten the gate of the prison is closed and the door-woman shoots the bolt. No man may tread on the straw mats on which they sleep, neither cousin, brother, nor father, for who can make sure of their identity? The pupils, whether they are stars or chorus girls, are taboo for all men.

It was not easy to visit Fukuko Sayo, one of the most popular and talented artists of the girls' opera. Two severe men accompanied me, one her music master and the other the business manager of the company.

She was not in the rehearsal room at the appointed hour. Music-masters, singing and dancing-masters and about a hundred girls crowded the room. Solo dancers were rehearsing for the next show, while others sat about on low benches, looking on, doing handwork, or answering their fan mail, which comes principally from women and girls.

These Takarazuka girls look considerably prettier on the stage as boys than they do in real life as girls. They lose most of their femininity, and their voices, after playing the parts of boys for several years, develop an adolescent sharpness. They spoke in the rehearsal room just as they did on the stage—like boys. Some of them were wearing tailored clothes of boyish English cut.

Then Miss Fukuko Sayo, the great box-office attraction, appeared. I had seen her the day before





in men's evening dress, her thin neck rising out of her starched shirt supporting her Eton cropped head. She was now wearing her uniform, which did not suit her too-short hair. Her boyish voice over which thousands had enthused the previous day sounded grotesque when one saw the dainty colour of her kimono blouse.

The music-master and the manager stood beside us and missed no word of our conversation, ready to answer any indiscreet questions quickly, so that the little star could only smile and nod her head. Under the circumstances I did not quite know what to ask the intimidated girl. Yes, she liked Gary Cooper and Marlene Dietrich. No, she would not marry anyone who was not Japanese. Japanese sport champions and university professors were the most acceptable husbands.

The two watch-dogs also answered my question about her salary. The little Sayo was thought especially highly of and received about four hundred yen pocket money a month. And I must not forget—and this seemed specially important to my two guides—that Miss Sayo was not an actress, nor a star, but only a "pupil." To be sure, she was applauded by hundreds of thousands and was responsible for huge box office successes.

The favourite books of Fukuko Sayo were *Poil de Carotte* by Jules Renard and *Intrigue and Love* by Friedrich von Schiller.



## CHAPTER XVII

### THE MIND BEFORE THE BODY

To anyone who wishes to define the Japanese intellectual life, Fukuko Sayo's choice of books is significant. The education of the modern Japanese is a remarkable mixture of fundamentally different philosophies, unsuited to each other and often considerably developed from their original state. The Japanese wants to know the sum of the knowledge of East and West. She absorbed the knowledge of the East gradually through the centuries: now she wants to digest the knowledge of the West in as many years. But this new education is not so much for the good of the soul as for encouraging individual progress. For instance, the desire of a Japanese to immerse himself in Carlyle or to model himself on Carlyle is not so serious as his desire to educate himself through Carlyle.

"From now on education shall be expanded until no village has an illiterate family and no family has an illiterate child."

These were the words of Mutsuhito, the great Emperor at the time of the revival of the Japanese people, at the end of last century, when their country had begun to grow into a modern world power.

To-day, only a few decades later, there are almost no more illiterates in Japan. Ninety-nine-and-a-half per cent. of the children of school age are being

educated, and the number of universities has grown from one to forty-five.

The founders of the new Japan knew even at the end of the nineteenth century that they could not conquer the world with strong muscles and machine-guns alone. They realised that education must come first, and the children were taught to feel that they were studying for their country and not for themselves.

The Japanese children still rise at dawn, and on early winter mornings they sit in unheated school-rooms with the idea that they will be able to concentrate better on their work under these conditions. Every Japanese elementary scholar has to learn two thousand Chinese characters (children in the secondary schools have to learn from five to seven thousand), and the Japanese and Roman alphabets. They are the most heavily-burdened school-children in the world, and statistics show that there are as many as three thousand two hundred annual suicides among schoolchildren. For this reason, many teachers do not dare to give their pupils bad reports.

The youth of Japan are receiving a national as well as an international education. The masters know well enough that the latter will prove in the end of more service to the country than the national education. The Chinese classics are hammered into the children's heads along with Western worldly knowledge.

As the years go on their burden is increased. Only a third of the students pass into the universities. Knowing what tremendous tests lie before them, they tackle their work with such vigour that even those

who fail would, under corresponding conditions in other countries, be graded as first-class students.

It is not accident that the Japanese often have to wear spectacles at an early age. And it is not only their eyes that suffer from the strain; nervous breakdowns and hypersensitiveness are also common. It was not unusual, among people I knew in Japan, for a student to be away recovering from overwork at a spa.

Fascist associations have been recently attacking the Ministry of Education with demands that education should be solely Japanese, and contain more military drill. The Minister, however, stands by the ideal of a two-sided education, for he knows that when nations' contacts grow they must keep in touch with each other, and that the present system is best suited to the era of the Pacific.

The Minister of Education admits that, perhaps because so much is expected of the students, the results are not entirely satisfactory. He admits, too, the value of relaxation, but at the moment no time can be spared from the pursuit of knowledge; for the march of Japan is at a decisive turning, and knowledge is power.

English is spoken more in Japan than in any other foreign country. Sometimes in cafés an English lesson is broadcast instead of music.

The application of English was much exaggerated. In the first years of the influx of the West it was even suggested that English should be adopted as the official language, but the idea was soon found to be unpractical, though the foreign names introduced by the new civilisation were admitted to the language in their English form. Such words as matches, collar,

handkerchief, beer, fork and knife have been adopted as they stand. All official and business institutions have recognised English names set alongside their Japanese titles. One of the great national daily newspapers which is printed in Japanese throughout does not forget, for example, to insert "The Tokyo Asahi" in Roman letters under the Japanese heading. Some of the big business houses conduct their correspondence with their foreign branches in English. Even the popular brands of cigarettes have English names such as Cherry, Golden Bat, and Hope. When Japanese come home from abroad they very often start foreign societies associated with the towns from which they have returned. English has become the country's second language. Some over-zealous students begin reading Bacon's essays with a dictionary as soon as they have had their first lesson in English. And as soon as they know sufficient English to be able to understand Bacon even without a dictionary, they start on French and plunge through Baudelaire with a dictionary.

Tokyo also has its streets of booksellers. Every window is a bookseller's, and all the shops are open until late at night. Self-taught youths spend days and sometimes half the night on high ladders, for when they have no money for buying books, they read them up in a corner of the bookshop.

The Maruzen bookshop is one of the large channels of Western culture in Japan. Very few books are published that are not to be found on its shelves. When the great liners arrive Maruzen announces all the new foreign books and their foreign catalogue is sent regularly to their customers. Here is an extract

from one of their lists which gives an idea of the subjects Japan is interested in:

"Ireland and the Irishman in the French Revolution," "The Modern Attitude to the Sex Problem," "The Life and Methods of Primo Carnera," "Psychoanalysis and Education," "Social Control of Sex Expression," "Scrap Book of Freedom," "Liberty and Democracy," "The Chinese Girl," "Mechanical Electrical Pocket Book," "The Diary of a Communist," "The Modern Airplane," "Die Frau im neuen Leben," "Berlin von Heute," "Die internationale Werkbundsiedelung Wien," "Deutsches Theater am Rhein," "Der Schädel des Negerhaupteplings Maddaau," "Marlene Dietrich," "Das Geschlechtsleben der Wilden," "Elizabeth and Essex," "Le Kaiser et la Responsabilité de la Reich," "Le Fantôme de l'Opéra," "Le Pays Magyar."

Foreign novels are not read much, for the chief demand is for geographical books and works of reference, books from which one can learn something.

Although foreign books are sold at the minimum price, they are not within the reach of the average Japanese, and all important publications are translated and commented on. More than three hundred translations of books on Goethe's works alone have appeared in Japanese, and *Faust* is published in forty different editions. H. G. Well's *Short History of the World* was translated six years before it became generally known in the Eastern European states. The works of the Huxleys, James Joyce, Sinclair Lewis, Feuchtwanger, Dreiser, André Gide, Marcel Proust, Thomas Mann, D. H. Lawrence, and Vicky Baum sell well.

Maruzen branches are to be found in all the large

towns of the country. There are departments with sections for the scientific and literary works of all the countries of the world, notices in the correct language indicate their positions. Books on the political movements of all countries are also piled on special tables, including tables for Fascist books and for works on Marxism. During the post-war years socialist literature held the field but that was followed by the wave of Fascism. The government have been trying in recent years to direct youthful interest away from the foreign idea; they want the Japanese to be influenced only through Japanese ideals. In 1932 the book-shops were full of books on Fascism, but by 1933 they had disappeared.

Apart from the imported English books, numbers of books are published in Japan in English. Most of these are books on Japanese culture which have been printed in English for propaganda purposes. Some of them are books about Japan by foreign authors, who, if they are paid for it, will write about the Japanese what they would most like to hear.

Great though it is, the mass of foreign literature dwindles into nothing compared with the active book production in the country itself, which has the second largest output in the world. In 1934, 26,331 books were published: 915 of them were on music, 2,625 on literature, and 302 were biographies. There were also large quantities of technical books, sold at low prices, for the Japanese workers are to grow spiritually into the machine age.

The literary year-books show that there are six hundred writers living in Tokyo alone. A great proportion of them are occupied with the problems of modern Japanese life. Some write about the

chivalrous Japanese of history, and many examine the West with critical eyes. Religion is now the ruling subject in the bookshops, for the wave of nationalism brought Shintoism and even Buddhism again into the foreground. The modern Japanese seek racial encouragement in the cult of the Shinto and spiritual peace in Buddhism.

When I was later in Hsingking, the Manchurian capital, I was hailed in my native Hungarian by an attaché of the Embassy, M. Hirano, who spoke the language as if it were his own. He had studied in Budapest for four years. I had given him verses from a group of Hungarian poems, and Hirano knew them all. Why had this young attaché taken so much interest in Hungary? Only because the Japanese want to know all the world, its peoples and its lands. As the majority of his countrymen went to the great countries, Hirano decided to go to Hungary and become an authority on it. There are only three other Hungarian experts in Japan, but if a representative from the country comes to Japan for any purpose, he cannot tell these four anything that they do not already know.

In the Tokyo *Ginza*, two hundred and forty days' voyage from London, there stands a three-storeyed house. This is the Ruskin Library, and the first and second floors contain Ruskin exhibits, and a comprehensive library of books about him and first editions of his works.

There is a drawing-room on the second floor with soft grey curtains, and an English fireplace and furniture of the nineteenth century. The house organ, the *Ruskin Society Magazine* lies on the table. A loud-speaker near a bust of the famous writer is

used for listening in to folk songs and printed on the wall one reads: "John Ruskin is the master of this house, the invisible host, the silent listener at every meal and every conversation." The club has two-hundred and ninety members.

Ryuzo Mikimoto, the son of the Japanese pearl king, sits in a little room on the third floor. He is the secretary and founder of the club, and for twenty years he has devoted his spare time to Ruskin. He has travelled six times to England on Ruskin expeditions, and is now working on the seventh volume of his translation of the Master's works.

In order to direct the country's scientific and literary interests in the best channels the following results have been evoked: 5,000 public libraries have been founded (in 1926 there were only 1,500): 1,125 daily papers and 728 magazines, of which 35 are literary reviews, 16 film magazines, 6 theatre magazines, 7 photographic papers, 10 radio papers, 7 for poetry, 31 for teaching foreign languages, 73 sociological journals, 58 for child-education, and 62 for child-entertainment.

The children's papers were more prominently displayed in Manchuria than in Japan itself. The Manchurian booksellers set them out on low tables over which the children of the Japanese colonists bent for hours. Although it was midsummer and holiday time, the children did not play in the street; they preferred to read in the bookshops, and as the booksellers could not break the rules of etiquette and press the customers to buy, the little book-worms were allowed to read on undisturbed.

The 1,025 daily papers in Japan work on Western



principles. The Emperor and the Imperial family are sacrosanct, but otherwise there is comparatively great freedom of the Press, and more than once the newspapers have brought about the fall of the Cabinet.

Four of the daily papers have circulations of over a million. They are despatched by aeroplanes to the various main towns, and some of the large papers bring out as many as twenty provincial editions. The newspaper offices in Osaka can hardly compete with the technical fittings of the most modern American newspaper offices, but they are certainly as advanced as any in Europe.

The Japanese intellectual classes in many ways have healthier and higher ideals than their colleagues in the West, and many of them are passionate champions of the joint responsibility of all cultured peoples in the world.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE WISDOM OF GREEN TEA

THE clash between the philosophies of East and West, the rhythm of the machine and the burden of their morality wear the nerves of the Japanese. They need relaxation and this they find at the tea ceremonial.

Hot, yellow-green bitter tea flows through Japanese life. It is drunk without milk or sugar before, during, and after every meal. Princes, peasants and beggars could not live without it. It is drunk in private houses and in offices, in castles and cottages, and every guest is welcomed with it.

Is the tea of the first or second crop? Is it the tea of the leaf or the bud? All cultivated tea drinkers can answer these questions at the first sip.

In Japan tea is more than a national drink. It belongs to a cult, a philosophy, a religion. The consecration of this symbolic tea-religion is the tea ceremonial. Buddhists introduced it to Japan from China in the eighth century when it was falling into disuse, and in a thousand years the Japanese developed it from a pastime to a devotional act.

Miss Chikuko Sato, a pretty young girl, took me to my first tea ceremonial.

The villa of the young millionaire Ochiai was situated in Aomori, on the Bay of Tokyo. We took off our shoes and a servant girl conducted us to the European part of the house.

The master of the house bowed low several times. He was a slim young man in a grey kimono, and modest and of simple taste.

We drank pink cherry blossom which floated in sky-blue cups filled with hot salted water. At the sound of a gong a fine looking elderly woman appeared in a black silk kimono, and led us into the Japanese part of the house. This was Madame Yurako Kikumoto, the mistress of the tea ceremonial.

A wall was pushed aside, revealing a small garden. It was paved with stones and we might have been walking down the bed of a village stream.

The doors closed and we were in the tea ceremonial room.

Oriental incense scented the atmosphere. There was an air of Japanese simplicity, costly simplicity. All tea ceremonial rooms are built and decorated according to strict rules. The room was covered completely by four straw mats, each mat nine and a half feet square. The wooden ceiling and walls cost more than three ordinary family houses.

The floral arrangement was most effective: a twig with two green leaves and two red buds rose out of a tall bamboo, this in its turn rose from a basket which stood on a wooden stand.

We sat down on flat, square cushions. In the middle of the room the old iron tea kettle steamed over glowing charcoal in a recess, which was polished smooth and bordered with copper.

The tea ceremonial began.

Peace and harmony, absolute peace and harmony, is the first law of the tea ceremonial. No one may speak or move. Every one senses the mood and feelings of his neighbour by his bearing and slightest

gesture. The outward world must sink into oblivion while another world is evolved.

It seemed like a quiet fairy tale. When the water boiled the tea ceremonial turned the simmering into the poetry of the sigh of the wind in the pinewoods.

My silent young friend looked like an image of stone, and the host like a slim pale Buddha.

The mistress seemed to draw hypnotic strength from the stillness.

At length, a door slid silently open and a small girl appeared. Eiko Mori San had been the pupil of Madame Kikumoto for six years, although she was then only eight.

A large bow of taffeta like a crown had been placed on her bobbed head. Black horn spectacles made her white-powdered face even more mask-like.

Her kimono was of thirteen colours. It had a black background and was arrayed with bunches of green leaves, dark green chrysanthemum buds, and flowers of carmine, vermilion, lilac, black, grey, orange, and white. A lemon-coloured sash encircled her waist, tied at the back in a large bow.

The coloured doll went down on her knees.

We returned the greeting of the little girl by bowing deeply on the mats.

Then she went out as ceremoniously as she had entered. She had only come to welcome us.

She returned, carrying a lacquer tea-caddy and the bowl in which the tea was to be brewed.

We followed the child's every movement, for it was all part of the ceremonial. Whatever she brought in was carried on the flat of her hands, like a relic. She did not lift her feet, but glided with measured tread in her white-stockinged soles.

The child conducted the ceremonial, guided all the while by the glances of Madame Kikumoto. She never let her pupil out of her sight, and the child had to carry everything out under our scrutiny.

She took up the small tea-caddy in her hands, and laid it on the mat. She drew a red cloth from her belt, folded it, wiped the top of the box with it and returned the cloth to her belt.

Then she opened the box.

Using a small bamboo spoon she ladled out the green powder tipped from hundred-year-old trees, and poured it carefully into the porcelain bowl, tapping the spoon on the edge three times so that every precious leaf went in.

Operations which would ordinarily last a few seconds dragged on for many minutes. The quiet was prayerlike. No one made the slightest movement.

The child poured the boiling water over the green powder, whisking it into a thick brew with her bamboo whisk. The sound is known in the language of the ceremonial as the "prattling of a brook."

Then she stood up. She clasped the bowl with both hands as if it were a sacred thing, and paced ceremoniously round the room till she came to the foreign guest. He looked at her, but her face remained a mask.

She sank on her knees and set the bowl on the mat before him, bowing low.

The guest acknowledged the bow and placed the bowl on the flat of his right hand, steadying it with the left. He lifted the bowl reverently to his lips and drained it in three and a half draughts, as has been the custom for eleven centuries.

When he had finished, they bowed to each other.

The ceremony was then repeated twice in front of all those present.

Then the ceremony of clearing away.

The child lifted the black kettle out of its recess and those who sat round could peer down on the glimmering charcoal.

She then picked small pieces of black and white charcoal out of a clean basket to renew the fire. Each piece had its particular significance. The black stood for the woods which cover the slopes of Fujiyama, the grey for the rocks, the narrow white ones for the cascades which flow between the rocks; and the white ashes which the child strewed over them were the everlasting snows on the summit of the holy mountain.

She heaped up the ashes with two brass rods, and we all thought of the great Fujiyama and the white lava that burns at its heart.

The tea ceremonial was drawing to a close.

Only then, after a four hour ceremony, could we admire the sacred instruments of the rite, which were passed carefully round; the bamboo spoon, the *chashaku*, and the bamboo whisk which mixed the powder into a thick brew. The tea ceremonial room was known as *chashito* and the tea-box was called *chaire*. The gong which announces the ceremonial is the *dora* and the ceremonial itself is known as *cha-no-yu*.

These small instruments are priceless family heirlooms. Intrinsically they are worth nothing, but they have the value of antiquity and tradition. And each one has a history.

Hideyoshi, Nobunaga, and other great Japanese generals presented their loyal followers and their vassals with gifts such as these, and they were passed

down from generation to generation; 198,000 yen, which at the present value is the equivalent of 50,000 dollars, was paid for one of these tiny bamboo spoons, and a tea kettle was sold for 10,000 dollars.

For those who cannot afford such sums a complete equipment can be bought for ten yen in any of the large department stores, and the layman can hardly distinguish between these and the old ones.

The Japanese who make a practice of tea ceremonials are trained to hear the softest sounds. They recognise in the sound which shoeless feet make at the beginning of the ceremony the self-control and the nobility of man. The tea ceremonial is a training for self-control and the Japanese choose a small room for it so that they may the easier concentrate on the harmony of their souls and their self-control.

Amid the chaos of high buildings, the roar of aeroplane propellers, the bleat of jazz, Japanese tenacity exacts the power of absorption in the national culture. When they give themselves up to the tea ceremonial, the people gain peace and renewed courage for marching on, for fighting, for victory.

The ceremonial was now over. During supper the young host spoke very little. He sat in our midst, serious and pale.

We took our leave.

The master of the house sat once more like a Buddha at his threshold. The paper door had been opened wide. He looked quietly after his guests.

When we were in the valley, we looked up again at the young millionaire's house. The light was still burning in the ceremonial room, and through the paper walls we could trace out his silhouette, slim and unmoving.

PART III  
WORKING JAPAN





## CHAPTER XIX

### THE SECRET OF CHEAP GOODS

"MADE in Japan!" That phrase to-day is stamped out by the hour in the rotation machines all over the world. It drives fear into the bones of business men in Lancashire, San Francisco and Duisberg. After the German goods, which were considered cheap, had surprised the world, the international markets had to be rearranged at the beginning of the twentieth century, and the law of supply and demand could be straightened out. No new disturbing factor was expected for the moment. Then war broke out.

Just as Europe was beginning to recover, it was realised that western trade and industry had to reckon with new competition, for the ebb and flow of trade was being adduced to a new centre. Those who could look on from outside and read American and European newspapers could see this development. They read that Japan, who had borrowed to build up her industry, Japan, who had, only forty years earlier, been an agrarian state with debts, now possessed the second largest tramp steamer service and the third largest trade fleet of the world. That she was even then building a trade fleet for Brazil, and that she was investing enormous sums in Asia, on all coasts of the Pacific, and, more intensively than anywhere else, in South America. They read one week that because of Japanese competition, two large textile factories in New England had been forced to close

down. Two weeks later they would discover that two glass works in Virginia had shared the same fate.

The early Japanese factories were built of red brick and "Made in England" was branded on each brick. They had all been exported from England to Japan in 1882. To-day, three old spinning machines are on view in a small industrial museum in Japan. They are the tombstones of a past epoch and were made near Oldham. But in the packing department of a modern Japanese factory, new patented Japanese spinning machinery is now being packed up for export to England.

People gradually became conscious that Lancashire, with her fifty million spindles and her tradition of a hundred and fifty years, was being defeated in the world markets by Japan, who had not quite nine million spindles. The "Datsun," the Japanese small car, was already called the Ford of the East, and that standard Japanese cars were being driven along the highroads of Europe. A Japanese bicycle, costing a pound, was ousting all other makes in the colonial markets. Until 1932 Germany held third place in the export of sundry goods to Africa, but Japan took her place and Germany fell down to ninth place, in this market. There was even a place in Japan called Solingen, where razor blades were being manufactured for all the world. Japan was soon exporting watches by the kilo to Switzerland, gold fountain-pens to Austria, which sold at two schillings, and to Italy she was sending spaghetti. Japan's export trade to Chile was growing from year to year and had already increased sevenfold. Rumania was importing arms from Japan. A south European central office had been started for deluging south Europe with Japanese

goods. Even Soviet Russia had employed Japanese engineers to reorganise their railways.

Such was the news that was read in the newspapers. It was being demonstrated that Nippon had risen to the status of an industrial state within the space of one generation, the next generation had brought her up to the status of an industrial power, and now was anxiously asking the world where the third generation would lead her to.

The business world of America and Europe was more ready to forgive Japan for absorbing half of China than for the trade sign, "Made in Japan." These three words stood for the country's power, and shocked the entire civilised world.

Cheap goods are, without doubt, Japan's greatest success. They made her trade victory over the rest of the world, possible, and thus the secret of cheap goods is the cause of Japan's success. What is this secret?

Some say "dumping," but that is rather a feeble explanation of Japan's industrial success, for Japan does not dump; if she did, it would mean that she would have to sell at under cost prices, and there is no profit in that. And to judge from her prosperity, she does not do that, in any branch of her industry. "Depreciated currency" is another explanation, but that argument does not hold water either, for Japan has to import raw materials which have to be paid for at foreign rates. Nor can it be a "low living standard," for the Japanese workman is no worse off than his prototype in America or Europe, and he is certainly incomparably better off than the workmen in the neighbouring states. The Japanese standard of living is different from ours just as our line of thought is different. Here is the kernel of the problem.

The colonies may be importing goods of poorer quality from Japan than they used to get from the Western countries, but they are satisfied that it is second-rate since they simply cannot pay for the best. It is true that millions of inferior electric globes are exported to the United States of America and that is an argument in the favour of the West, but that is no reflection on all Japanese products. Japanese textiles, for instance, are excellent in their way, and Japanese heavy industries have a splendid reputation. A town in Holland knew what it was talking about, when it ordered all the pipes for a new drainage system from Japan instead of the German industrial town that lay just over the frontier.

There is no denying that the Japanese have a mania for *copying* the work of others, but under present conditions, there is no alternative, for they cannot be expected to adopt overnight for themselves the tastes of foreign countries which have after all been developing for centuries. And in any case, that argument cannot be considered to be decisive. The only decisive factor is the mentality of the Japanese workman. He is different from all other workmen. That is the secret of the cheap Japanese goods.

It is easier to explain the phenomenon of Japanese success to an ignoramus of economics than to an expert who is not easily persuaded to think metaphysically, for Japan can only be understood metaphysically and graphs and logarithms will not achieve anything.

The report of the commission of the Federation of British Industries in 1934 was refreshing in its unconventionality. The delegation travelled through Japan and Manchukuo for only three weeks. Lord

Barnby, Sir Charles Seligman, and Messrs. Guy Pollock, and Julian Piggott, all signed the report. They declared,

“Apart from the modernity of plant and organisation, Japan possesses in her national spirit a great asset. From early childhood every Japanese has the principles of loyalty, discipline and industry inculcated into him or her. Every day all Japanese school children, before starting work, pay homage to the portrait of their Emperor and the symbol of their religion. Their loyalty and their religion are part of their daily life, and the spirit which animates Japanese Industry is one of duty to their country. The Japanese workman feels that his work is not only a means of livelihood, but is a contribution which he is making to the greatness of Japan. It is this spirit of national solidarity, reminiscent of the spirit which animated the people of Great Britain during the War, which is one of the great motive powers of Japanese Industry. This must not be overlooked by anyone wishing to form a just estimate of Japan’s future development.”

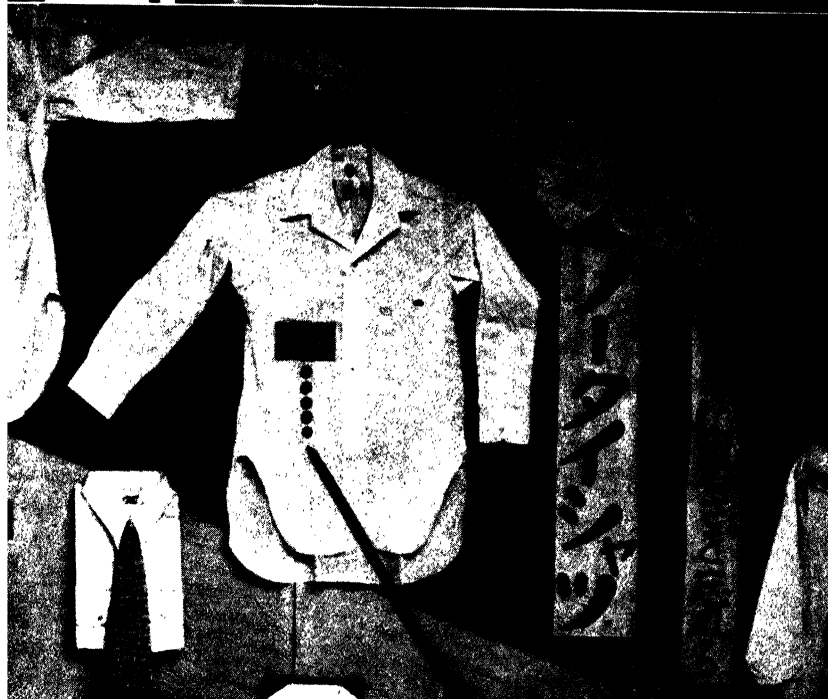
Japan is fighting this great trade war for the markets of the world with the help of an almost medieval loyalty and a fanatical race-consciousness. One magic word stokes the engine of Japanese labour and if the women textile workers, who are absurdly severely treated, revolt and rush through the streets demonstrating, and demanding higher wages and more freedom, or if work stops in the great ship-yards, or even a strike is suspected, this magic word is passed round the workmen by clever agents. The workmen return to their machines and as they clamp their vices they imagine that they are struggling

against the whole world which has sworn to crush their own country. Japan, the national well-being of their fatherland, that is the magic word that is responsible for the cheap labour.

The contrast between Japan and the rest of the world crops up in all the different strains of work, and modern American publicists are already beginning to see the future relationship between East and West develop out of this contrast.

At first it looks as if the catchword, the Japanese workman is toiling not for himself but for his country, is only clever capitalistic propaganda, but this is not the case, for there is a case for the fatherland. The annual increase in the population of a million, the impossibility of cultivating the soil to a greater extent, the return of emigrants from the neighbouring countries although they have been conquered, because the Japanese cannot compete against the low living standards of the other Asiatic settlers, the ban on Japanese immigration to more favourable countries, the eagerness of the youth to work. . . . All these factors are driving the Japanese people to attack world trade, and their industries seem to be the only means they possess to keep going. So it is only natural that every new market gained is regarded as new land, literally and metaphorically. It means a piece of land for so many thousands of their comrades, and this fight for existence is making the Japanese who are temperamentally unsuited to business, the best traders in the world.

While the young Chinaman considers the calling of merchant a high and manly ideal, the young Japanese has to resign himself to it with some regret, for only a generation ago the position of the merchant







was the lowest in the land. If, for instance, one compares antique dealers in China and Japan, the Chinaman is obviously the born salesman and the Japanese is marked down as a clumsy beginner compared with the Chinaman who is master of the art of convincing his customer and persuading him to buy. In spite of their most persistent efforts, the Japanese have not been able to oust the Chinese small trader from the ports of the East.

But in more important trade, where intricate plans can be concocted within office walls, the Japanese concern about their existence disappears and its place is taken by organising genius and business acumen. The export offices are the scene of Japan's struggle for her life, and the fruits of her industry gild Japan, which is naturally a poor country, with some of the gold of Croesus.

Their ardour is so strong that they have organised their factories on almost military lines because they have discovered that the highest performance is obtained in this way. When they were planning to build their first railway-carriages, they ordered four from different countries. They took them to pieces and out of the bits they built a fifth, which was proved the best, and was adopted as the model for the rest. Synthetic methods triumphed!

All kinds of ingenious schemes are turned out by mass production in the Japanese export offices, and every detail is planned as carefully as in any military manœuvre. Indeed the whole operation resembles a brilliantly conducted war, except that there are no guns. And the campaign introduces unusual figures to the scene of the international trade, who are to clear the way for the cheap Japanese wares and who are entrusted with remarkable duties.

Some serve as missionaries of Japanese goods and wage a religious war in their cause. They harp on a race motive, especially in the British colonies and among simple peoples who are hit by economic difficulties. They preach the gospel of cheap Japanese goods, which are there for all and with which Japan is presenting the coloured world with civilisation for next to nothing.

Others travel abroad as journalists and each has his pocket film apparatus, for they are the trade investigators, the market pioneers of the great industrial concerns. They force their way into the natives' huts and film their way of living. They photograph the pots with which the women cook, the pipes the men smoke, the clothes they wear, and the ornaments they love. When they have made their pictures, these journalists return to Japan and the films are shown in the factory before an audience of directors and artists. Dozens of new sample articles are made as a result of these films and when they are approved, they are produced by the thousand. The manufactured articles filter back to the natives' huts and the natives, who have always made everything by hand, realise that it is no longer worth their while when they can get everything from Japan for a song.

The Japanese only manufacture goods that are in demand. I met a Japanese traveller who never carried a bag of samples. His sole duty was to travel about asking what his customers wanted, for everything can be had to order, and no matter what it is, when there is a demand for any article, it is produced by mass production in the factories.

But when something is made on their own initiative, the market is bombarded with it systematically.

Japanese leather goods are an example of this. These gaudily coloured women's bags, made of pig-skin, with paintings of Fujiyama on them, are to be seen in every shop window from Honolulu to New York and from the London Strand to the Kurfürstendamm in Berlin.

One of the worst points of Japanese industry is the way they treat the middleman. If a wholesale dealer arrives at Osaka from Batavia he is received ceremoniously, attractive offers are made to him, and he sets out for home well contented with the cheap price lists in his pocket. But before many weeks pass, another Japanese trader will in all probability have appeared on the scene, representing the same firm, and will offer the same goods at considerably cheaper prices than the Batavian paid in Osaka. The spirit which through organisation, mechanisation and clever sales methods brings Japanese goods to victory, demands the present Japanese living standard, and without that, success could not be achieved. But, of course, the living standard is not considered low.

The Japanese indeed believe that although their living standard is not all that could be desired in certain directions, culture is as serious a consideration and many of them even demand that the rich cultural and aesthetic inheritance of Japan must be protected against the onslaught of the low cultural standards of the Western countries. From whichever point of view you look at it, the true nature of things will not be discovered if there is loose talk of a low standard of living.

When we read in European papers about Japanese prices, the real value of the yen must be borne in mind, for Japanese prices are usually exaggerated by

journalists. Although the official rate of the yen is now fixed at about a shilling, its home value has not changed since the time when it had three times its present value in exchange. So the textile workers who are said to be paid 1.20 yen or 1s.—1s. 2d. a day, are actually earning over three shillings by Japanese standards.

In spite of her lack of natural resources and the smallness of her area Japan has to feed a population of nearly seventy millions. But the Japanese make virtue out of their poverty, living very frugally, and although their workmen exist principally on fish and rice and can never rise to meat, with milk, butter and cheese only occasionally, they do not want these "luxuries." And this applies to rich and poor alike. Baron Mitsui, who employs thirty men every day to sweep up the leaves in his garden, eats just the same food as a petty clerk or a workman. Luxury is as restricted in housing as in food and never gets beyond a certain stage of simplicity; and those who are not hypersensitive do not notice the difference. The millionaire eats fish and so does his gardener. The millionaire recognises the different shades of quality of his fish but the gardener would never in all his life tell the difference between his fish and the millionaire's. The advantages of such ways of living are obvious for a country that must produce cheap goods.

A Japanese workman can build a house for his family for 1,000 yen and for 16 yen a month he can rent one. Artistically his house is not a whit lower than any European or American house, and the Japanese workmen have a bath seven nights a week. That can hardly be called a low living standard.

The Japanese workman can buy himself a summer kimono for one yen upwards. His wife's costs 2 yen and the kimono is no less becoming and hygienic than the more complicated European suit. And the elementary school children are not required to spend more than half a yen yearly for all their books which are certainly quite as numerous as in Europe.

The Japanese housewife can provide for a family of five on the miraculously small sum of ten yen a month, because her forbears have always lived so cheaply. Meat, milk, cheese and butter are as unheard of luxuries for them as chicken, goose, oysters or turkey for European homes. Wages correspond to the living rate.

A textile worker, who has to work ten hours a day, earns 1.60 yen a day and the women who work at the looms get 0.70 yen on the average.

A university student requires 50 to 60 yen a month, and a teacher or a clerk does not earn more. Forty-five per cent. of the population are peasants and thirty-four per cent. of these families live on 300 yen a year. Thirty-six per cent. live on 740 yen a year and the remaining thirty per cent. draw incomes of 1,000 to 1,500 yen. Shop girls get 50 sen a day and waitresses ten yen a month. A chorus girl does not get any more and housemaid goes out for 7 yen a month.

The spirit of patriotism which characterises the workers, their puritanical living standard, and their almost feudalistic feeling of loyalty and duty are just as important factors in the successful exports as the genius for selecting all that is best in Western inventions and assembling a synthetic production. The former are the unwritten laws which rule the empire of Japanese work.

## CHAPTER XX

### IN A KIMONO STUDIO

THE bright Japanese colours entice me into the realm of Japanese work. The women's kimonos give the streets of Tokyo the gaiety of an eccentric garden. Silver and gold flowers, patterns of stripes and squares enliven the fine silk of the pastel blue, red, green, pink and grape lilac kimonos, and although there are thousands of these kimonos to be seen on the street, the patterns and colour schemes are scarcely ever duplicated. Only the motifs are the same, cherry blossom in spring, chrysanthemum in summer, falling maple leaves in autumn, and snow flakes and pine twigs in winter.

Although most of the kimonos are stitched and painted by hand, they are produced wholesale. The silk kimono worn by the housewife, the typist, the teacher or the prostitute, is specially painted for the owner, but all the same a young Japanese girl does not have to pay any more for her individually designed kimono than a Broadway telephonist for her every-day dress. Indeed it is the other way round, for 16 yen buy an artistically painted silk kimono. The poorer classes wear cotton or artificial silk print clothes, and the very rich have kimono decorators come to their houses to show sample designs which are carried out for some thousand yen. Such show pieces are passed down from one generation to another as heirlooms. The kimono exhibitions held

by the large department stores are society occasions for the women of the town and long remain the chief topic of conversation. For the foreigner the fashion parades resemble picture exhibitions, for the fashion of the day is portrayed by the form of the pattern and not by the cut of the garments. Sometimes the snow-covered crater of Fujiyama is in vogue, at other times it is warriors in full array.

The kimono factories work with methods which are jealously guarded as ancient secrets. The kimono painters have often been practising their delicate trade for five and even six generations back.

In a kimono factory the first hall that one enters is a drawing-room. Here are made the designs which are laid before the customers. The tables are covered with old pattern books which show in detail the kimonos worn for the last thousand years and more at the Imperial Court. Japan's history up to the Meiji Restoration has made its impression on every page. These old fashion books tell the tale of the highly developed colour sense of the Japanese. Thousands of years ago there was jurisdiction about the use of colour in Japan and a comprehensive and finely graduated colour scale determined the costume of aristocrat, soldier and priest. Colour was an essential part of the culture of these times. In the course of the middle ages the middle classes tried to free themselves from the colour regulations by fashioning a quite different colour scheme, every shade of which had been recorded in the fashion books. To-day the old designs of the artists are simplified, and modernized, and often serve as the base of new designs.

When the customers have decided upon the designs



they are copied on the silk by artists who use fine brushes. The artists sit on mats and as soon as they have finished a roll of silk it is hung up over their heads on bamboo rods to dry. In a third room girls sit and sew on to the dry rolls of silk gay flowers with golden tipped petals and fill in the print leaves with silk thread.

The next stage is the protection of the colours. The painted cloth is covered with a kind of filmy paste which is removed afterwards by a steam process. The rolls of silk pass on from one hand to the other, being cut here and sewn there, until finally it reaches the artist who paints on family coats of arms which consist generally of small marks on the back. Dozens of kimonos are being made at the same time and each one passes through fifty different pairs of hands, for fourteen days on end.

Even the self-coloured kimonos without flowers are hand-painted. The silk is rolled out and stretched out in strips of twelve feet between two bamboo frames. Great tubs of liquid colour are laid out in long rows and in each tub there is a large brush. The clever old painters then smear the white silk with a paint composed of five shades that gives a shot effect. But who can tell how long the kimono painters will survive! It is the fault of the inrush of Western civilisation, and the urge to world trade brought nothing but shattered illusions to the Japanese hand workers, for work was torn from their hands and hammered out in the clamps of the machines. The quick industrialisation turned the Japanese hand-worker upside down, and once he stood in a higher rank than the merchant, for he was an artist who put something of himself into everything that he made. His soul rather than his

head directed his work and for that reason the transition from manufacture by the artist to manufacture by machine was all the more painful.

An old kimono painter took down a huge gala kimono from a peg. It was actually four kimonos interlayed into one. It was a wedding kimono and had taken months to make. These kimonos cost anything from three hundred to three thousand yen. This costly garment is worn once only. Working women who can buy their ordinary workaday cotton kimonos for three yen must sacrifice more than a hundred yen for their wedding dress.

But the wedding kimono that I saw was ordered for a town. The workers' union of Ashio there in Tsudo had ordered it for five thousand families and it was hired out to any house that held a wedding.

## CHAPTER XXI

### THE TSUDO MINERS

HALF a day's journey from Tokyo, the little local train stops in a deep valley. We had arrived in Tsudo, the miner's town. The moon was shining through the trees and lights glimmered dully through the paper walls of the workers' houses.

Mines have been worked there for three hundred years and the relationship between capital and labour has always been on a family basis. If the names of miners of to-day were compared with those of three hundred years ago they would for the most part be identical. Tsudo instructs her own generations of workers, and even to-day the young men of Tsudo are loath to take up different careers from their fathers', for they know that if they leave, they will have to work for a new family and they realise well enough that they will not have the same chances outside their own circle.

The fire in the club room of the mines administration infused the cool autumn night with a pleasant warmth. Sugiyama, the general secretary of Ashio, the largest copper mining company in Japan, put on a gramophone record, Schubert's Unfinished Symphony. He did not say a word while the gramophone played. Weariness was outlined on his face.

The secretary began to speak of his own life, his children and his wife who lived far off in Tokyo. He could only see them for three days each month,

and not only he, but also Director Satake and all the other administrators had to leave their families in Tokyo, for the family life of the officials was intentionally restricted so that they could devote all their paternal sentiment to the great working family of five thousand.

Waking up in Tsudo held no surprises, for the bare copper mines looked just the same as they had done in the moonlight, grey and brown, the same colour as the thousands of little houses that filled the valley. Not one striking building was to be seen, even the head office was a simple wooden barracks that fitted unnoticeably into the maze of houses in Tsudo.

Long fire-proof walls divided the rows of houses into small equal sections. The sliding doors which served as front and back walls in the houses, were still open, although the autumn wind was blowing. The streets were empty and there was no one to be seen except for a few women rubbing off with damp brushes the dirty paper that covered the doors.

Sugiyama took me into a house. A photograph of the Emperor and Empress hung above the door inside, and above it there was a shrine dedicated to the memory of the Emperor Meiji. As all the doors had lifted off their hinges, the whole house actually consisted of one huge room, airy and without furniture. There are no such compartments as dining-room, bedroom, and sitting-room in Japan, nor are the rooms very high, but as the Japanese spend most of their time at home sitting on the floor, they do not notice it.

In Tsudo the rents are very low. The houses, which are pulled down and rebuilt for every second generation, are let to the miners by the company; rents are

calculated in straw mats, the average rent for each family coming to two yen a month at the most, including water and light. That sum is hardly anything for the Tsudo workmen, who with an average of 1.80 yen a day are the best paid miners in Japan.

The secretary was greeted everywhere he went. We met some of the "Jommus" and the bosses. The happy social life in this mining town is largely due to the boss system. Twenty-five jommus and their assistants visit each family whenever births, marriages, and deaths occur and in this way encourage camaraderie.

When the men come home dressed in their grey dungarees, their aluminium helmets flash all the colours of the rainbow, for some are painted blue, red, lilac, pink and pale green, while others keep the natural shining aluminium, and when they stand together in a small group, the colours reflect and sparkle and look for all the world like a rainbow. This original mining uniform came into fashion in honour of the army after the successful campaign in Manchuria. They smile as they go down the mine, but before entering the lifts they become solemn and, removing their helmets, bow before a little hanging altar of the Imperial ancestors. They always go through this ceremony when they come up and go down.

Under ground, every copper mine in the world is the same. . . . But the friendliness between the workmen and the mining engineers in Japan during the pause at midday is remarkable. Before they eat the men strip off their dirty clothes to the waist and wash their hands and faces with damp cloths, and

not until they have done this do they open their square aluminium boxes which hold two chop sticks, snow-white rice and some dried fish, which they wash down with hot green tea from vacuum flasks.

I was standing at the entrance to the mine when a shift came to the surface and I observed their expressions. Many of them were smiling. It is possible that what seemed like a sign of inner satisfaction was only the mask of discipline, but I could not help comparing these men's faces with the lugubrious appearance of German miners and the apathetic indifference of the Chinese coolies.

Youth predominates in Tsudo, indeed I did not see one old man, for the men stop working at forty-five and their places are taken by their sons, who then keep their fathers. This duty is preached to them from their earliest years, and the elder workmen are helped when they give up work by the existence of a savings bank. After working for fifteen years in the mines they can save as much as two thousand yen and to this sum is added the equivalent of four hundred and eight days' wages. In a Japanese provincial town, where one does not hang about bars at night, but is content to watch the moon rising over the trees, such a sum is quite sufficient for one's old age.

When the workers go home they call in at the bath house and jump into the common round tub, soaping their bodies and sousing themselves with wooden ladles before going into the hotter inner tubs. There are three bath houses for the workers, one for the men, another for the women and a third for the family where all can go before bed with their wives and children. A dressing-room which is divided into two wings, shuts in the bath house.

Two nurses in white dresses and white shoes and stockings and white caps wait at the exits of the dressing-rooms when the workers come out, to disinfect and tie up any small scratches. And in clean kimonos, fresh from their baths, brushed and combed, the workers step on to the mats in their homes.

Sunday is devoted to sport. Sugiyama was again my guide, for not only he but all the directors have to attend every Sunday at least five of the sport establishments of the various mine personnels, and he whipped me off from a relay race to a hundred metre sprint, from a tug-of-war to boxing. Everywhere we went we had to take part. Paper lanterns and boxes of matches were pushed into our hands and on the firing of the pistol, we had to light the candles and run to the winning post with a flickering flame. My light went out half-way, but the polite workmen hosts pretended not to notice and ceremoniously presented me with second prize.

Some days later I continued my journey to another great Japanese working family, at Osaka, the greatest cotton spinning mills in the world. There I must admit, I saw another side of the family system.

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE LITTLE GIRLS FROM THE FACTORIES

WHO does not know the impressive scene when shifts change over at great factories! When the sirens blow, the broad gates swing open, and the flood of humanity streams into the empty street, till it is as dark as a field under a locust swarm!

In Osaka, which has risen thanks to the factory workers, where tens of thousands fight for the banner of the Sun behind spindles and looms and the little factory girls carry the blessings and curse of the progress of Japanese industry on their shoulders, the gates are always shut, for the workers live in the factories.

It was early in the morning, about half past four, when I drove to the factory. I wanted to see a full working day.

About a hundred yards away from the gates my car was stopped. A policeman wanted to know what I wanted there at that early hour. The Japanese engineer sitting with me in the car made no difference and the man had to take down my biography.

Since Japan began to build more ingenious machines than Lancashire, industrial spies are feared as much as military spies.

The Japanese police is so widely organised that it was not to be wondered at that I was discovered even in the early morning and hauled out of my car.

A police sentry stands at almost every street corner, in a round grey box connected by telephone. The



boxes are so arranged that the man on duty can easily watch over three or four streets, and should a suspicious-looking foreigner be wanted—and in the eyes of the eternally distrustful Japanese, every foreigner is under suspicion—the man in the box has only to call up the central police office. Soon bells will be ringing in all the sentry boxes. . . .

“A foreigner in a green hat to be arrested” . . . The policemen lie in wait in every part of the town, like hounds before their kennels, and the moment the man in the green hat appears he is pounced on. My car number was certainly taken on the way to the factory and broadcast to the sentries, but the car was not held up until they were quite certain just where I was driving. This is the kind of mesh that has to be penetrated before a Japanese factory is visited.

A long strip of grass planted with evergreens runs through the middle of the almost painfully clean factory yard. On one side the hands work, on the other they live. This is the chief factory of the Toyo Boseku Mills.

Three men in grey uniform were waiting for us in front of the wooden dwelling houses of the two thousand workers. They bowed together, their uniforms identical to the last button. Which was the director, which were the secretaries? The similarity of their uniforms was symbolic, for the director and the higher officials wear the uniform of the employees, and eat the same food; and no one may go on strike.

The workers work in two shifts, the first going on from five in the morning till two in the afternoon, the second from two in the afternoon till nine o'clock at night.

The clock was pointing to 4.55. Gong sounded inside the houses, voices and orders rang out and people strode to and fro, one two, one two, one two. . . .





A column of girls marched up in formation from the doors of the houses across the yard. Serious, expressionless faces peered from under the white caps. They were dressed in dark blue blouses with white cuffs, dark blue pleated skirts reaching only to their knees, black woollen stockings covering their badly formed legs, and on their feet shapeless half-shoes. A thousand girls were tramping across the yard, all between thirteen and twenty-two. The first shift was moving into the workrooms—without breakfast. It was like prison exercise.

The workrooms are light and well-aired. The girls filed off to their own machines, each minding twenty-five looms. In some cases one girl minds as many as thirty, forty and even sixty. In Lancashire one man is required for six looms and it takes months to make a good workman of him. In Japan an ignorant country girl is turned into a first-class worker in eight days' time. And in Lancashire they earn two pounds a week for six hours a day, while in Japan an eighth of that is paid for nine hours a day. Till 1927 Japan imported her weaving machinery from England, but to-day Japan not only has her own machines, but Lancashire has even got new patent automatic machines made in Osaka.

The threads race through the machines. Some rooms where automatic looms are working are almost deserted. The small, soft hands of the girls only interfere when a thread tears. How terrified some of these country girls must be, who only a few weeks earlier had never seen a car and did not know what a cinema was!

At halfpast seven the factory filled up again, two columns marching from different directions towards the breakfast hall, the early shift hurrying out of the

factory, the late shift from the dormitories. The two armies of girls met in the breakfast hall. The girls gathered round small tables on which a kind of vegetable soup was steaming, folded their hands and prayed. After breakfast, which lasts only ten minutes, the first shift tumbled at once into the hot bath-tubs, for they had to stand by their machines again punctually at eight. . . . The second shift returned to their house. I accompanied them.

Parcels, presents from their parents in the country, are piled up in heaps round the woman porter. The girls quickly changed out of their shoes into slippers and slipped down corridors with polished wainscoting. A story goes that an American woman who walked for two hours through the factory in white stocking soles, found her feet still clean at the end.

The outside walls of the ruler-straight passages are of glass and on the inside there are fairly large rooms which serve as living-rooms by day and bedrooms by night.

The bedclothes were still lying on the mats. In every room I saw the inevitable niche decorated with flowers and a scroll picture. Low writing desks stood before the window.

The late shift which was working that week until 11 o'clock at night was having gymnastic instruction, and through the passage window the girls could be seen raising their arms, bending their knees and turning their heads from left to right. Exercise over, the girls divided up into groups for free lessons in sewing, domestic economy, tea ceremonial, literature or mothercraft.

By midnight all lights are out, and no one is allowed to leave the buildings at night. Only on the three free Sundays in the month may the girls receive

## LITTLE GIRLS FROM THE FACTORIES 187

visitors for the day and go out for walks. Life in this factory is not unlike life in prison.

But the directors prefer to compare their works with a large family circle where discipline must prevail, and just as the father of a family does not allow his sixteen year-old daughter to wander about the town by herself, the works management do not allow their girls out. The directors sign contracts with the parents of the girls, and their confidential scouts, who are always scouring the country districts for new recruits, undertake the responsibility of preparing them for marriage. On the average these girls leave work when they are twenty-one to marry.

No high wages are paid in these factories. The girls get about 75 sen a day or about eightpence, from which 12 sen are deducted for meals as well as other smaller amounts for welfare expenses. Living is free and the girls can theoretically send home about 10 yen a month.

They are provided with the practical things of life which they certainly could not acquire in their villages and in most cases they do not leave their factories before they have saved their dowry. As often as not the bridegroom chosen by her parents is awaiting for each girl when she returns home, and they can soon marry and have children whom they know how to bring up.

All the working girls in Japan do not have as good a time as those at Toyo Boseku. The large factories are under strict state control and must pay great attention to social welfare, but even in these big works strikes occur. Painful scenes follow until, "in the interest of national well-being," they are put back in the old grooves. There are three million Japanese

girl workers, but only a small part of their number live in the mammoth factories which are usually shown to foreigners. Most of the girls work in the smaller factories where they are more than ever tied down to the family system. Their obligations are the same as in the large factories but their working day often lasts more than ten hours and the small works cannot offer them the same relaxations, for there are no floral arrangements, no dancing lessons, no sports and no big, airy bedrooms.

These social problems remain to be settled by Japan in the future.

But Japan will one day have to solve another big problem. The Japanese are masters of the art of technical reproduction and are clever copyists, for their energy, their powers of endurance, their fanaticism, and their organisation ability are unsurpassable, but it seems they lack the creative genius of the inventor. Interest in technique arouses quite as much interest among them as it does among the English and the Americans, but they do not seem to have much natural talent for discovering new ways and means.

There is much talk of future wars, and mysterious lethal Japanese inventions play a big part in the phantasy of many writers, but as far as one can judge from the practical side the vital factor is not there, because the majority of Japanese inventions are improvements, not their own creations.

Although machinery remains a foreign field to the Japanese, they take to it easily. The Japanese inventor is happiest when he is working on something that comes straight from nature, and nature is his greatest means to the end. An example of this is the pearl oyster, with whose help he has built up a great industry out of nothing.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE INDUSTRIALISATION OF PEARLS

"When the first raindrop fell out of the clouds into the blue sea, the great waves enfolded it into their strong arms and rocked it to and fro like a tiny baby.

"'How tiny I am in this eternity,' said the raindrop.

"But the sea answered, 'As a reward for your modesty, I shall make you an everlasting drop and will present you with the colours of the rainbow. You will become a drop full of light and the purest of all jewels. You will rule the world and you will hold sway even over women.' And the pearl was born."

*(Persian legend of the birth of the pearl.)*

THE Japanese, Kokichi Mikimoto, discovered how to industrialise the cultured pearl. With the help of modern science he was able to breed flawless round pearls and his discovery brought a new industry into the world.

The sentimental romance which has always been associated with pearls went hand in hand with Mikimoto's industry from the first, and after silk, pearl production is one of Japan's most popular national industries. The former vegetable merchant who is now owner of fourteen bays has remained the simple son of the people that he is, and his simple way of living and the typical Japanese quality of his invention have made this quaint old man a popular hero. The country and provincial people still believe that their Mikimoto discovered the pearl.



In Toba, the centre of the cultured pearl industry and Mikimoto's birthplace, his life is already legend. The children learn it in the schools, and grandmothers tell it to their grandchildren. The wildest exaggerations go the rounds, and even the official bibliography prepared by his propaganda bureau often gives contradictory dates. His life is, without exaggeration, the pattern for Japanese careers.

In 1852 Japan was for the West still a forbidden and unknown legendary land. Dutch merchants could trade at the port of Nagasaki, but they could not go inland. The simple people in the interior knew nothing in the 'sixties of the world outside. Then in 1852 foreign guns thundered near the coast and the American Commodore Perry demanded entry and the right to trade.

For years the Samurais debated whether after centuries of complete isolation from the world they should submit and let the foreigners in or drive them away. In this decade of the first awakening there was born to the family of a vermicelli merchant the future pearl king.

Young Kokichi could learn the Japanese alphabet only at night because in the day time he had to help his father to turn out vermicelli. When he was fourteen he started on a career of his own to help the family of eleven. He became a greengrocer.

By eighteen he had met foreigners for the first time, and this meeting changed his life.

One summer night young Mikimoto woke up and looked out on the Pacific Ocean as it lay in the moonlight and noticed a foreign warship on the horizon. It was the first English warship to put in at Toba and at that moment he had his first important idea.

He woke up all the householders who kept hens and after buying all their fresh eggs he rowed out to meet the strange warship.

Mikimoto could not speak English nor did the crew know Japanese, but his comic mimicry and natural humour captivated everyone. Of course they wanted to buy fresh eggs after the long voyage and they even paid more than he asked, so before Toba was awake Mikimoto had sold all his produce.

The captain asked him to remain on board, but Mikimoto felt the money in his belt. He had never had so much money in all his life and—he was a Japanese. How could he leave his country in these critical times! No he would not stay on this foreign ship. The great town of Tokyo had always been his dream, and now that he had money, he must be off. And his dream came true.

In Yokohama, Tokyo's neighbouring town, trade in mother-of-pearl flourished, and Chinese merchants got all their supplies there. Real pearls were also traded.

Mikimoto knew that Toba was the home of the pearl oyster, for the whole coast was covered with mother-of-pearl and pearls were found occasionally, so he persuaded the Chinese merchants to come to Toba. In Toba, he told them, they would buy more cheaply, and he awaited them in three months' time with a large supply.

Then he set off at once for Toba, the fastest runners carrying him in a palanquin over the Tokkaido, the main trade route. He raised the alarm in Toba and bade the people collect shells and dive for pearls. He gave up his greengrocery and bought up mother-of-pearl and pearls with his last penny.

The Chinese arrived and Toba did excellent business. Mikimoto, the hero of the day, was made a town councillor.

The young town councillor and pearl dealer began to interest himself in politics, and as foreigners had brought him luck he joined the Liberal party and became a prominent protagonist of the parliamentary system.

After politics the fact that pearl hunting depended so much on chance, was his chief worry. Often he would find nothing in the shells for months on end, and then suddenly so much that he could live on the proceeds for four months.

In 1890, the third decade after the opening of the country to foreigners, the little agrarian state of Japan announced her third industrial exhibition. Mikimoto was an exhibitor and showed some of his pearls and mother-of-pearl. At this exhibition he saw a river shell in which a mother-of-pearl Buddha had been grown. He bought it for three black pearls.

The shell with the Buddha gave him no rest. How had the little figure come there? One day he split the shell and was amazed to see that the Buddha which he had broken at the same time was not pearl but only a cheap glass figure covered with mother-of-pearl.

On the day when he made his discovery he visited a professor of zoology, Mitsukuri, who was giving lectures at the exhibition on the life of the pearl oysters. The professor explained to him how this glass figure had been inserted in the shell of a river oyster and had been sweated round with mother-of-pearl. The same action would take place in the case of round granules, so theoretically speaking, real

pearls could be cultivated in this way. But Professor Mitsukuri warned his young visitor against false hopes. Cultured pearls were already on the market in Europe, but they could not be compared with the genuine article, and only fetched a little more than mother-of-pearl, for they were ill-formed. At best they were only semi-circular and their colour was a dull, unattractive yellow. No one had been able to produce round pearls.

But Mikimoto was full of hope. The world swam round in his mind's eye, sparkling with pearls. Pearls rolled through his dreams. He was determined to find the secret of round pearls.

For three months Mikimoto's family collected thousands of young, live oysters from the island of Tatokuyima. In some they even found large pearls. His wife and the children were delighted, but the father raged. He did not want to find pearls. He wanted to cultivate them himself.

When they had stacked up heaps of shells, he operated on three thousand, one after the other, and inserted granules of mother-of-pearl in the flesh just as Professor Mitsukuri had told him to do. Then he dropped them in a secret place in the sea.

He waited four long years till the oysters under the sea had sweated the granules into pearls. And all the time he went on operating on live oysters.

Mikimoto was thirty-six when, on the fourth anniversary of the submersion of the first shells, the family brought them to the surface. When they were all piled up in front of the house, the Mikimotos retired to put on their festive kimonos. The father alone kept on his working clothes.

Their hearts pounded as Mikimoto opened one

shell after the other. Mother and children looked on anxiously. But they were disappointed. Three quarters of the harvest was spoiled with polypus and sea-weed. The remainder contained only half-pearls which had been traded for years in Europe and had no special value. Four years' work had been wasted and the family fortune was nearly frittered away!

Half Toba went on a pilgrimage to the island of Tatokuyima where the work had been going on. Delegation after delegation went to ask the town councillor to come home, for Toba did not want to lose her honoured son. But they came away empty-handed, for the Mikimotos were determined to hold out until their objective had been realised, and only the children were sent back to Toba to go to school.

Two years after the first unsuccessful pearl harvest the young wife died and Kokichi Mikimoto had to take up the fight alone. Years of tireless work passed and he sank a new set of shells every six months. Every harvest was an improvement on the last, the pearls were becoming rounder, lighter, and more colourful, but they were still a long way behind natural pearls both for lustre and form. Still Mikimoto's name was becoming sufficiently well known for professors to come from Tokyo to help him with his work.

In 1905 he received the greatest earthly honour that can come the way of the Japanese. Meiji, the greatest of all Japanese Emperors, was interested in pearl cultivation, and when he was in the district Mikimoto was allowed to explain his methods through the mouth of a minister of the Imperial Household. This meeting with the Emperor gave him new cour-

## THE INDUSTRIALISATION OF PEARLS 195

age, and he sent his half-finished pearls to Europe where they were admired at exhibitions, awarded medals, and even bought for comparatively good prices. But they hardly caused a sensation.

Mikimoto was an unhappy man. He had been honoured and yet he had not reached his goal, the cultivation of pearls which should be indistinguishable from natural pearls. He had every improved method patented but his task was as hard as ever.

In 1913, after twenty-three years' work, he achieved his ambition. The harvest of 1913 brought him completely round cultured pearls which, in their perfection, even surpassed real pearls. Mikimoto invited all the recognised authorities from Tokyo to Toba and they all confirmed that his pearls were as round and shining as natural pearls.

The Imperial Patent Office quickly registered his new method, with the number 33640. The record describes how a granule is inserted in the pocket-like organ of the living oyster and how this can then be placed by an operation into the fleshy part of another shell where the mother-of-pearl substance is secreted. The incision is disinfected and closed up, and the shell is submerged in the sea for seven years to give the oyster time to coat the granule with the mother-of-pearl substance.

Now that the pearls were there, how was the sensation to be presented to the world? and would the pearls be accepted as genuine? Would others not immediately steal Mikimoto's process and despoil him of the fruits of his labours?

Mikimoto asked the Japanese professors and the chamber of commerce for advice and it was decided

not to send the pearls abroad for the time being. First of all they would ensure the possibility of a speedy production on a large scale in the event of success in the world markets.

Mikimoto had now unrestricted credit in Japan. He bought up the fishing rights in all Japanese bays where oysters were to be found, and millions of treated oysters were dropped into the sea. The headquarters of the firm of Mikimoto were established in Toba and they were laid out in such a way that in an emergency room could be made for two thousand workmen. Buildings went up all round, where oysters were operated on, others where the pearls were counted, others where they were bored with electric drills and others where they were threaded. Toba was then equipped for the fray.

Only then, when everything was in battle order, was the famous harvest of 1913 launched on the European jewel markets. While the shipment was still under way Mikimoto took on the direction of the newly established propaganda bureau, which was awaiting the decision of Paris.

When the Japanese pearls arrived in Paris the jewellers received a shock. The faultlessness of these pearls frightened them. They read the patent and assumed that from then on pearls could be cultivated limitlessly. That would lower the value of the real pearls, which would forfeit their position as the queen of jewels. Fortunes would melt away and families would be ruined.

The fact that experts could differentiate between cultured and natural pearls seemed to be a way out, so a defensive action against their introduction began at once, and cultured pearls were stigmatised

## THE INDUSTRIALISATION OF PEARLS 197

in Paris as imitations; the world Press was made to raise the alarm against Japanese pearls.

The jewellers brought successful legal proceedings against Mikimoto, who was kept in touch by telegraph from Paris with every development. But he did not lose his head, and he answered catchword by catchword. "You say that I have devalued pearls? I reply that I am acting for the good of society, for why should millionaires alone treat themselves to pearls? I want to give them to the women of all nations and of all classes. You say that cultured pearls are imitation. What about your home-bred silver foxes and mink? Are they imitations too? Furs and pearls are animal products and while you breed silver foxes for women, I breed pearls. That's the only difference."

Mikimoto won his point. The smaller jewellers did not wait for the legal ruling and ordered Japanese pearls. More beds of cultured pearls were laid and in a short time milliards of oysters were sweating in the sea near Toba.

Science was then called in and international experts gave their verdict which was on the side of the cultured pearl. Dr. David Starr Jordan, of Stanford University, Dr. A. Kofoed, of the University of California, Professor Shipley and Professor Jameson, of England, Professors Boutan, Joubin, and Dollfuss, of France, Dr. Eppler, of Germany, all decided that cultured pearls were not imitation, and there was no other course left to the court but to agree.

The demand for cultured pearls grew and Toba prospered. Mikimoto was made Senator and later a member of the Upper House. His name was known in all the great cities of the world where his shops



were opened in the best streets, and the market for his pearls increased so quickly that after the War the supply of oysters in Mikimoto's fourteen bays was insufficient. Mikimoto was no longer content to breed pearls. His thoughts turned to the silk industry which bred silk-worms and he decided to breed oysters to produce pearls. He retired to his lonely island and before long he announced this new invention to Toba.

Up till this time the larvæ had swum about in the sea and the shells were found wherever they happened to come to rest. To-day as a result of Mikimoto's invention the sea bed in his bays is covered with lime, catchers are laid down in the spawning months of July, August, September and October, and the larvæ are trapped. At the end of October the apparatus is hauled up and as many as sixteen thousand larvæ are caught in each trap. The live larvæ are transferred to nurseries where they remain for three years. In that time they grow into oysters and the famous operation takes place.

In addition to this exploitation of nature there remains the natural supply of the sea. Larvæ still grow up into oysters on the sea bed, and they are dived for by women.

In 1920 the pearl harvest passed the million mark and the prices of real pearls on the world markets sank considerably, yet the jewellers strove to keep them on a higher level although scientists supported the cultured pearl.

In the end the natural pearl was saved and the price of the cultured pearl was pegged at a fifth of the natural pearl, so if Mikimoto should choose to swamp the world market with cultured pearls he

could damage the natural pearl but not kill it. Mass production would only depreciate his own prices, which are practically under his control. Foreign competition has deprived the Japanese cultured pearl of its exclusiveness, but if it should ever come to mass production, Mikimoto, with his new inventions, is insured against serious competition. Since Mikimoto made his discovery the price of natural pearls has dropped, but who can tell how much the depression is to blame for that?

Yokohama, the pearl king's son-in-law, telephoned me one day.

"Mr. Mikimoto will receive you in Toba on Thursday morning as his guest. Miss Hideko Ono will act as guide on the journey and in Toba. You will meet her on Wednesday evening at Tokyo station in the Pullman car of the Toba night express."

I met her in the Pullman car. She was a charming young girl dressed in a kimono, with horn spectacles and heavily powdered face, who talked English well with an American accent.

The engine had whistled when Mr. Yokohama rushed up the platform, a servant following him at a respectful distance, carrying a small packet, no bigger than a cigar box, in his hand. Formalities over, the servant handed him the packet and Yokohama passed it into the compartment. It was some sweets for the journey. The servant retired, but Yokohama stood still until the train began to move out and he continued smiling and waving as long as we were in sight.

The curtains were drawn and the train rolled gently over the lines. This is how one travels as the pearl king's guest.

Next morning at half-past-seven someone pulled aside my curtain. It was Miss Ono, wishing me good morning and saying that we would arrive in Toba in half an hour.

The Pacific Ocean, mazed with small islands, stretched out before us. We steamed into Toba. Huge posters with photographs of healthy, half-naked girls, larger than life-size, called for pearl-divers. Mikimoto's major domo with his staff awaited us on the platform.

The pearl king lives on a tree-covered hill that rises up behind Toba. A black limousine drove us up the twisting road and set us down in a beautiful park. Small one-storeyed villas nestled among the trees. Mikimoto lived in one and the others were at the disposal of his guests. That day we were the only visitors and Miss Ono and I each chose a villa. Two maids and a man servant are supplied for personal use with every house.

My house was a little palace. Except for the European furnishings in the verandah, it was entirely Japanese. Marconi had lived in it before me. The glass walls would slide open, and there was a view on every side. This is how the pearl town of Toba, its mountains and woods and its bays and the pearl king's Japanese garden are made to delight the eye.

The writing paper is headed with a coat of arms worked out in pearl oysters, and the tea cups and ashtrays are marked in the same way. The sleeping kimonos that are provided are also decorated with a pearl pattern.

Boiling hot water had been run into a wooden bath tub in the bathroom.

## THE INDUSTRIALISATION OF PEARLS 201

When we met the major domo again he told us about our day's programme. Every hour of the day had been planned; first of all we were to lunch with Mikimoto on the "Island of Pearls," and his private car drove us down into the bay. A smart motor boat whipped us over the waves. Mikimoto's family flag flapped at the stern, the word *Pearl* worked in bright Japanese writing on a violet background. A young woman served China tea and sweet biscuits on board. The wind swept her thin, light blue silk kimono tight against her figure. This was Miss Kato, first secretary to the pearl king.

The island came in sight. It was planted with palms, cedars, pines and all kinds of plants, and dotted among them were shrines and pavilions. This was the island of pearls, Mikimoto's sanctuary. We could see him standing on a landing-stage, wearing a bowler hat and a kimono, waving to us. We turned in towards him and waved back without stopping. Our meeting had begun and it had to develop gradually according to the etiquette of Mikimoto's household.

The *Pearl* sailed on from bay to bay, from the rest island to the workshops. We saw small boats and launches on every hand, but the crews scarcely noticed us as they leant out of the boats gazing through water-glasses which penetrated the depths and scraping the bottom for oysters with long poles. As soon as they lifted the poles out of the water, girls with white caps dived in and collected the shells that had been loosened from the sea bed. A winch hauled up the catch. This process is repeated throughout the day.

Diving strains the lungs, so when their work is over

the girls swim back in batches to the coast, which is not far off, and lie down to rest on the turf, stripped to the waist to allow the sun to beat freely on their lithe bodies and firm breasts. While they rest the oysters are brought to shore, operated on, and returned to the sea for seven years.

The next bay was empty. But although there were no boats nor men to be seen work was going on uninterruptedly day and night. Empty barrels floated on the surface, lashed together in long rows like a gigantic raft. Wire cages hung below the barrels and inside the doctored oysters were sweating. During the seven years the cages are not often brought up, and then it is only to remove the weedy grass that would hinder their growth. Each cage contains a hundred oysters and twenty-four in every hundred produce round pearls, the rest being spoiled. Two years ago Mikimoto's fourteen bays produced three million pearls a year, now the output is five million.

Mikimoto was waiting for us in front of the luncheon pavilion which was furnished in European style. This man of seventy-nine looks more like fifty, for the deep furrows in his sun-burned face suggest hardships rather than old age, and his small black eyes are quite youthful. He had prepared a surprise for us, and had concealed pearls in the hot oysters that were served as hors d'œuvres. Much to his delight we picked them out of our mouths to be told that they were ours.

Mikimoto took out his false teeth between the courses. When his mouth receded his face seemed to grow smaller by half, and he looked like a wrinkled old woman. He was delighted when we smiled.

## THE INDUSTRIALISATION OF PEARLS 203

Luncheon over, he became a different man. As he heard his foreman's reports by telephone he became a Napoleon of trade.

Under the temple dedicated to the spirit of the pearl ten million pearls lie, buried between stones in the earth, perhaps by now pulverised to chalk. Mikimoto sacrificed them to the spirit of the oyster who was upset by his operations and who must now work and die for him. This may sound a pretty fairy-tale, but the fact remains that cultured pearls have successfully withstood a fall in prices.

A great turtle lives in one of the artificial lakes in the park; it brings longevity and good luck to the pearl king. Octopuses were amusing themselves in another pond while a third was bristling with carp for which the guests were asked to fish. Two men stood by each of us with a rod whilst we cast our lines. The spare rods were baited, for one could not be too quick. In a minute half a dozen carp had been put in the bucket and in ten minutes our arms were weary and the buckets were full. And all the while Mr. Mikimoto was standing on an arched bridge obviously delighted that his visitors were having such splendid luck.

Dinner was served in my villa. My carp were served as the first course and Mikimoto appeared when the dessert was brought in. He enjoys a good appetite, but neither drinks nor smokes. Every morning in his temple he reads to his private god three news items out of the morning paper and then asks for his advice. The pearl king loves reading papers, and he is good at reading between the lines. A slight allusion on the financial page is sometimes enough to make him change his policy.

He has made the following time table for himself:

5 a.m.	Get up, bath, exercises.
5.30	Breakfast
6.30	Research work in the laboratories.
11.0	Lunch.
1.30 p.m.	Supervision of the export office.
6.0	Dinner.
8.30	Bed.

That evening we walked through Toba. This town must sink or swim with the pearl industry, for at least one member of every family works in Mikimoto's concern. The tall, old man often saunters through Toba's narrow streets. Since his childhood he has been bound up with the town and its people, and the citizens appreciate the fact that even to-day he does not put on silk kimonos, but still wears a woollen one with the family crest of pearls glittering on the back.

Mikimoto's invention stands as a symbol to many of his countrymen, for it has shown that new paths can always be cut. To-day they possess a factory for the product of the pearl, so why should not the morrow bring a factory for milk or meat on the same basis, and perhaps even more rationalised as in America.

The people are content here. There is no reason to believe that to-morrow they will not discover one synthetic food composed of many foodstuffs; they might even invent tabloid food, and instead of working with their fishing fleet, they may start a fish factory.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### THE FLOATING FACTORIES

It is difficult to imagine Japanese cookery without fish. The fish swim in the soup as vermicelli, they appear in the form of white cheese and they are eaten raw. Sometimes they are pink and taste like chicken. The carp is the symbol of masculine strength, and on May 5th carp balloons are flown. This has been a feast day for boys since the twelfth century. In the art exhibitions the fish predominates as motive, and a famous Japanese picture portrays a boy riding the clouds on a fat carp.

The phenomenal talent of the Japanese to improve on anything they copy is especially striking in the government fishery at Hokkaido. An American invention has been copied and the results are startling.

Salmon are drawn across the Pacific and swim up the Ishikari to Hokkaido in their thousands.

Upstream, a few miles from the mouth of the river, a great toothed mill wheel bars their way. Men in white overalls stand on a bridge which connects river, wheel, and a revolving basin, with the bank. From their position the men can watch the fish as they are sucked by the motion of the toothed wheel into the revolving basin. The wheel revolves relentlessly. The part which draws in the fish willy-nilly, descends mercilessly to the surface, trap doors open, and the wheel drags the fish, large and small, into the basin, where they are first dazed with cudgel blows and then



sorted out in sexes. The womb is cut out of the hen salmon and the red fish eggs are poured into metal dishes filled with water. The cock sperm is added and the hatching begins. The parent fish are packed into lorries and later are on sale in all kinds of variations in the fish-shops.

The salmon eggs are stored in sun-proof sheds and gradually hatch. When the grilse are one centimetre long they are transferred to a large tank, and as soon as they have grown up a dam opens and they are set free to swim down the river Ishikari seawards to the Pacific. Their ways part at the river-mouth and they swim as far as San Francisco or Honolulu, but exactly five years later they return, instinctively, to spawn at their birthplace. For nine days they swim up the river and the wheel is waiting for them and sucks them back to death.

If this automatic fish supply goes on, in a hundred years a vast army of fish will swim the ocean ensuring Japan's food supply.

Japan's floating factories sail through the gulf of Tartary and the Orhotsk sea to Kamchatka. They set sail in a body, with five hundred fishermen and workmen on board in addition to the crew. Huge supplies of preserving boxes and tons of coal and fresh water are stored in their holds. At Sakhalin the armada splits up, every mother ship a complete factory escorted on each side by eight motor junks and two large motor boats.

Japanese vision has built these factories which reap their rawstuffs out of the sea and put off their finished products at the next coast. They work while they sail, and sail while they work.

When the nets are full they are pulled in automatically and spew their catch on the first deck. Nothing but fish can be seen, smelt or breathed. The men wade knee-deep in a sea of living fish, stunning them with sticks. In the midst of chaos the great invention of the twentieth century comes to the rescue, the conveyor. It runs along an open gutter and the men throw on the fish. The belt is never empty and twists round the ship like some serpent until it brings the fish to the place where their heads are automatically chopped off. Then it divides up into two, shooting the heads down one side, the carcasses the other. The process rolls on a stage farther and the fish are passed hither and thither, in one place their fins are snipped off, in another they are passed through steel-chambers where the spawn and the guts are cut out.

The conveyor never stops. Soon the freight is no longer recognisable as fish and then at the end of a deck it is discharged in front of a heap of salt. Coarse hands salt the fish and fling them back on the conveyor that runs to the opposite end of the ship where human hands come into play again and pack the fish in boxes. The boxes are in turn closed and the last stage is reached when the cases are stamped for export: Packed in Japan. Finally they are stowed in the hold.

While the work goes forward in the mother ship the nets of the smaller boats are catching fish within a five mile radius. Some factories catch crabs, but the system is the same. The crabs circle round on the conveyor before being dropped into a tank of boiling water. As soon as they are cooked red they continue on their way.

Below decks there are no such modern fittings for the crew. The quarters are crowded and dirty. Rice and fish is the only diet on the way out and rice and fish is the only diet on the way home. Shocking accounts of the living conditions in these ships have been given by young Japanese socialist writers. These ships may be known as floating factories, but they do not recognise the social regulations observed even in Japanese factories on land.

The fishing industry trembles before red propaganda. At Kamchatka, in Soviet Russia, Japanese and Russians fish side by side, and although efforts are made to prevent them meeting, storms sometimes blow at Kamchatka and the fishing boats of the floating factories are dashed on to the shore.

As soon as the fishing armada leaves Sakhalin the foreman, who is the confidant of Japanese industry, addresses the workmen, and they learn that with her catch of nearly three million tons of fish Japan leads the world. They are told that the fish question is a matter of life and death for Japan, for it is the staple diet of their over-populated country. The foreman goes on to explain to his men that they, the fishermen of Sakhalien, are guaranteeing Japan's position and those who are influenced by foreigners' theories are only menacing society, and are threatening the Empire.

Nevertheless discontent does exist in these floating factories. The propagandists of Soviet Russia work cunningly. They cannot usually speak Japanese but Chinese and Korean communists interpret for them. The late Japanese proletarian poet, Takiji Kobajashi has described such a Russo-Japanese meeting:

A handful of freezing Japanese sought refuge from the storm on the white coast of Kamchatka. The Russians who offered them hospitality spoke through a Chinese interpreter. The Chinaman asked the Japanese:

"You have not any money, have you?"

"It's all too true. We have no money."

"You are poor, then?"

"All too true, we are poor."

"So you are proletarians, you understand?"

"Oh, we understand."

"The capitalists are strangling you." (The Russians illustrated this sentence with gestures.)

"The capitalists are growing fatter and fatter." (The Russians here puffed out their stomachs.)

"In Japan the workers go about like this." (The Russians here pulled long faces and dragged their feet after them like sick men.)

"In Russia they walk like this." (The Russians pulled themselves up and strutted towards the Japanese with threatening steps.)

"You are quite right, you are quite right," screamed the Japanese.

The Chinaman continued.

"In Russia there are no people who do not work. No one grasps the workers by the throat, do you understand? Russia is not a terrible land and whoever says so, lies. You of the Japanese proletariat ought to act like this." (The Russians formed into line, joined arms and marched forward together.)

"If you do that, you will become like us." (The Russians rolled up their sleeves and showed how strong they were.)

"Japan is not healthy to-day, but a Japan of workers would be splendid. A proletarian land, do you understand?"

"Yes, yes, we understand," murmured the Japanese.

Russian and Japanese embraced, and that is as far as the story goes.

But the floating factories have eventually to return from Kamchatka to the Empire, and the crew have to slave on the way home. Then perhaps they will meet one of the Japanese cruisers which patrol these Northern waters to protect the fishermen. The banner of the rising sun will be flying from its mast and as soon as the fishermen see the flag their eyes cloud with tears. . . . And that is the reason why the Japanese communists are condemned to failure.

Will the sea be able to feed the hundreds of millions of Japanese in the future? Will the Russians continue to grant them fishing rights? Since 1900 Japan's fish requirements have risen by 182 per cent. Japan is still almost self-sufficient as far as food is concerned for only ten per cent of it is imported. But in thirty-five years the present population of 70 million will have risen to 100 million and by the end of the century she will require a hundred per cent more food. What will happen if there is a blockade? This danger and the growth of the Japanese to the hundred million mark weighs down on the people of Japan and all the world like a nightmare. But provision is already being made to feed the future generations.

The army has encamped on the plains of Manchuria, and is spreading out down the fertile valleys of China. And at the same time scientists are researching on a big scale to discover the solution of the food problem. But without the help of science, Japan cannot survive.

## CHAPTER XXV

### THE FOOD LABORATORIES

WHEN the houses in Japan are shut up for the night the family are silhouetted through the paper walls. The outlines of the children as they play on the straw mats work like eighteenth century shadowgraphs on the thin paper that covers the sliding doors. Although it is raining and the outer wall has not been shoved to, not a drop of rain falls on the paper windows, for the eaves regulate the water as it runs down from the roof. Loudspeakers drone out in this fairyland of bamboo, wood and paper:

“Monday morning: Miso soup with 195 calories: 100 grammes of 70 per cent polished rice, 50 grammes turnip tops, 16 grammes baked beans, 30 grammes Miso, 3 grammes Nibosh meal, 7 grammes of oil. . . .

“Monday midday: Sardine dish with 202 calories: 80 grammes dried sardines, 20 grammes cabbage, 100 grammes rice. . . .

“Monday evening: Chicken soup, vegetable dish, Furofukiradish with 394 calories: 162 grammes rice, 100 grammes black radishes. . . .”

The silhouette of the Japanese housewife can be seen writing behind the paper window, carefully taking down the standard menus as a man's voice dictates them through the radio. And thousands of other Japanese women are doing the same, and when it comes to a food shortage, every woman in the country will be copying down these instructions.

Professor Tadasu Saiki, director of the Imperial Government Institute for Nutrition, broadcasts these recipes for concentrated food, and he is paving the way for a peaceful revolution in Japan, the revolution of nutrition.

His object is to put the nation's food on a scientific basis and bring it into line with the supplies at their command. He aims to make the provision trade a state monopoly, and, as far as possible, achieve collective meals. Factories, schools, barracks, and whole districts should in emergency be provided for by one kitchen and the Japanese should not have to spend more than twopence a day for their three meals. Wages would be arranged to correspond.

The laboratory of this amazing professor is at once a mystery and a sensation. New, and till now, unheard of foodstuffs are being stored there, and will come to the rescue in time of need.

Contrary to its significance, the food institute is a simple building. A pine tree surrounded by a fence in front of the entrance, is the only decoration. It was planted by the Emperor Hirohito on his first visit. Saiki explained his plans to the Emperor in a little waiting room which is scarcely bigger than a country doctor's, and the divine Emperor gave up a whole hour of his time to the great scholar.

When Dr. Saiki wagged his head it looked like a football that was being tossed in a maze of deed boxes. Documents covered the shelves and his desk, and from the midst of this sea of paper this sixty year old man, who has the eyes of a schoolboy, told me the history of the Japanese food problem.

The Japanese have been confronted with a food problem since the restoration of 1868. Nourishment

has always been scarce in Japan and the people have suffered as a result. In 1882 the Japanese government introduced German doctors and economists into the country, and after studying the problem for some years they recommended the country to change over to a diet of yeast and fats. Their advice was followed in the army and navy with good results, but as it was impossible to supply the peasants with more fish and vegetables, poverty prevented this plan from being generally carried out. Japan's population has doubled since 1872 and although it will perhaps be twice as big again at the end of this century, the Japanese are loath to emigrate. It is this disinclination to emigrate that drives the country to desperate measures. Japan must help herself.

Dr. Saiki believes that most people do not nourish themselves properly. If they had the right food they could live longer, and Saiki is creating a standard of nourishment in the light of biological and scientific knowledge, and Japan will benefit.

In Dr. Saiki's opinion the Japanese can get all the nourishment he requires for 16 sen, or twopence-halfpenny. This sum may astound the European, but that sum will buy the Japanese sufficient to make him efficient mentally and physically.

The introduction of communal nourishment will help the export trade, which is, after all, ensured if goods are cheap enough, and as the price of goods depends on the living standard of the producers, it is the aim of the Japanese people to keep down prices, yet keep a high living standard. To-day every nation has to fight for existence. Dr. Saiki thinks that the Japanese workman who is fed according to his recipes, although he only spends twopence a day for



his three meals, obtains more nutritious and more varied food than the American and British workmen who have to spend more than ten times as much. With these domestic conditions, it is obvious that Japan stands at an advantage in world trade.

Dr. Saiki told me something of his theory. How, for instance, did he calculate the nourishment that suited the average Japanese? How did he compose the twopenny menu. His most important experiment at the start was to discover the energy required by a man in repose, for this theory was already the basis of scientific research all over the world.

In the course of three years of experiment, three thousand people had to lie still for twenty-four hours without, if possible, moving a finger shut up in Dr. Saiki's apparatus for measuring human energy. These machines measured the exact calory requirements of the subjects, and by taking the average figure he was able to calculate the amount of energy required. Then the experiments went further and the people were studied in movement.

Dr. Saiki showed me photographs of a woman in twelve different positions. Her face was covered with a gas mask connected to a rubber bag on her back. She performed twelve different pieces of work wearing the gas mask and after a certain prearranged time the air was pumped out of the air bag and analysed. This analysis showed exactly how many calories she required for different domestic duties. This was the first of many experiments which are still going on, for at first the calories consumed by working men could not be calculated; it seemed that the woman required the same energy whether she ran for an hour or scrubbed. Then experiments were made with

thousands of postmen, railwaymen, teachers, and steel workers, and eventually the calory consumption of the average Japanese workman was calculated, theoretically at least. The foundation of Dr. Saiki's communal meals was laid in this way, and attempts are still being made, after twenty years, to calculate results as accurately as possible.

One afternoon at five o'clock when I was at Dr. Saiki's, several policemen, teachers, postmen and tram conductors appeared at the institute and I was told that they would not leave it for twenty-four hours. At six they supped according to the Saiki communal menu and an hour later, twenty-four of them stripped and went into the examination room. Their hair was cropped so that their height could be measured accurately; paper soaked in starch and water was clamped over their bodies, and then dried with fans. This is the Saiki method of measuring the human volume.

By eight o'clock the institute had been turned into a factory, and driving belts roared. A man with a rubber bag on his back ran on a moving belt, always moving but never coming forward, while another man in a white coat stood at a lever with a stopwatch in his hand. The man on the moving belt was the four-hundred-and-sixty-seventh postman to undergo this test, and the man holding the stopwatch was calculating his calory consumption while in action.

In the next room more men were hermetically sealed in glass cases, some weaving, others hewing stone. They were not wearing gas masks but thin rubber tubes led from the cases to dials and more men in white coats were taking down the numbers registered. When thousands of these figures had been

noted, the average calory requirements of each type of worker would be worked out, in theory.

Cupboards filled with graphs lined the walls. Every patient has a folder containing the results of all the painstaking tests. Thousands have been tested already, and although the end is not yet in sight, some interesting statistics have been arrived at. It has, for instance, been proved that policemen require more nourishment than anyone. The worker in the heavy industries comes next, then the tram conductor and then the teacher.

Experiments with the professions have not progressed so far as with manual work and up till now only students and teachers have been tested. Some students were made to study for examinations in one room and then a few days later they had to perform physical work. The result of this experiment was that the scientist was able to decide that although manual workers required more calories than scholars, the scholars took longer to regain their strength.

In Dr. Saiki's opinion these individual experiments with the different professions are forerunners of a new social order, and he believes that at a time of national crisis wages will be regulated according to the calory requirements of employees. However these problems are far from being actual, and they will only arise *in extremis*.

When building up his theory, Dr. Saiki has been careful to see that the seventy million Japanese should not all have to eat the identical food, and he has already provided menus for five hundred different meals. If, for instance, a supper has to consist of 237 calories, everyone need not eat recipe number one, and although something quite different may be





chosen, both dishes will supply the same amount of calories.

These variations demanded a great deal of work. Saiki collected six thousand different foodstuffs and by analysis discovered how much calory power they produced in the human body. After working out accurate tables of the prices of these foods he began to compose five hundred breakfasts, five hundred dinners, and five hundred suppers, not costing more than 16 sen in all, for 3 meals, and each supplying the requisite amount of calories.

Professor Saiki has published a book on the subject. It consists entirely of columns of figures giving particulars of the calory producing quantities of the six thousand foodstuffs, the calory requirements of women and children and men at different stages of life. The author would like this book to be noticed not only in Japan but also in Europe and America, consideration of course, being given to conditions in the different countries.

Two hundred and fifty scientists work for Dr. Saiki in the Empire. Every day brings new results which can be used to convince the people; Saiki does not aspire to economic dictatorship. He wants to persuade the people by reason.

He took me over his School for Nutrition which he keeps up at his own expense. His students have demonstrated their affection for him by giving him a nickname, the true sign of popularity, and dubbing him "Master of the White Radish." Forty-two men and women stood round a large horse-shoe table, each with three different dishes which they had made up themselves at a cost of 16 sen (2½d.). The professor went from place to place, tasting with two chop-sticks

every dish and then checking the written account of each dish which showed how many calories they contained. One student had made a miniature car with two slices of an apple as wheels and a dried eel for an axle, which bore triumphantly a small crayfish.

Thirty of Japan's fifty-one provinces have taken Saiki's students as directors of food supplies. Others are found in factories, hospitals, and reformatories, and two of them are engaged as nutrition experts in the Imperial palace. In provincial towns they work in people's communal kitchens which have been founded by Saiki. They are known as the Food Distribution Union, and the director in each district is the local chief of police. Factories, large and small, draw their food supplies from these kitchens, and each establishment has its own enamel pots on which their names are painted, so that when messengers fetch the meals they can pick out their own pots at once. And of course employers and employees eat the same meals.

These kitchens are only a beginning, but when the need arises it will be possible in an extraordinarily short time to supply every family and factory with meals in this way. And all the time Saiki is heading towards a state monopoly for all important foodstuffs, for Japan dare not jeopardise such precious things any more.

Saiki's influence has also reached the villages for his book of nutrition passes the severest test of being put into practice. His students explain the book to the villagers, and after reckoning the calory requirements of each family they stay to see that the directions are carried out. Now in the experimental villages every family is preparing its own meals.

Saiki's peaceful revolution moves slowly, but very surely since the concrete results disarm the incredulous. In a government school in a Tokyo suburb for instance, half of the children were fed for a month on the old lines and the rest on Saiki's menus. Their weight, height, and chest measurements were taken before and after the test, and the results showed that the Saiki children had thrived much better than the others. And a short time later when an epidemic broke out in the school, the percentage of the sick children stood at 0.99% against 15.69% in the Saiki group's favour. And when the chief of police in Tokyo carried out an experiment in factories there were fifty per cent. fewer cases of sickness among the Saikiists than the rest.

The Emperor's children also eat Saiki's bone-forming foods and the Emperor himself only eats Saiki's recommended 70 per cent. rice which is coarser but more nourishing than 100 per cent. rice in Europe.

Dr. Saiki is also preparing for time of war. One evening at the Imperial Institute for Nutrition, everyone had gone except the chief cook who was experimenting with a new recipe for war time. Plants and animals which humanity had never used for food, were analysed to see whether they contained any nutritive value. Saiki has included sea-serpents within the range of his calculations, and after working with them he was poisoned and had to lie up for three months. Two years later he tried the experiment again and again he was ill, but he will attempt it again.

Saiki took two loaves out of his desk, cut off a slice of each and offered them to me. One loaf was yellow



and was made with straw and the other was green and was made of leaves. Emergency bread is being made although till now no bread is eaten in Japan.

After passing through long corridors we arrived at the plant archives. Two hundred and fifty experts are working for this department, and every plant that grows in Japanese soil has its special indexed folder. All Japanese plants are charted, and the edible portions are shown in colour. No one had thought of these plants in connection with nourishment. In the snowdrop chart for example, the bulb is recommended, and if Japan should be threatened by famine or blockade these charts will be reproduced by the million and distributed by aeroplane to the farthestmost parts of the country. Provision has also been made in case an emergency should arise in mid-winter.

Saiki pointed out rows of shelves lined with thousands of phials of all sizes in which the seeds of dried plants had been preserved. White labels covered with figures and Japanese writing were stuck on each phial. The institute knows in advance what scarcities the winter is likely to bring and these test-tubes contain specimen plants in readiness for the emergency. Most of them have not been eaten by man but they are perfectly edible.

Recipes for dishes of mixed plants have also been worked out and they can be distributed as quickly as the coloured charts. Methods for using the husks of fruit and vegetables have also been thought out and in town and country housewives are asked to dry pea and bean pods in the sun for a week and then to prepare them for eating. And one can feel reasonably sure that they have gained in nutritive value in the process.

A cook brought us a plate of grasshoppers. Saiki took one as if it was a sweet. I tried one and it did not taste at all bad, for it had been dipped in a soyabean sauce and cooked a dark brown. According to the tables and books that I found in the laboratory which gave the food value of grasshopper as compared with fish, meat, rice and soya beans, grasshoppers are more nourishing than fish.

Dogs, cats, snails and frogs have also been experimented with. Saiki considers cats a delicacy and in his opinion rats are delightful food.

But the correct use of the more usual foods is more important than these freak diets. Saiki maintains that fish heads, bones, scales, skin and guts can be used, by being pulverised before being eaten. Even weeds contain important vitamins.

Before I left, Saiki assured me that more comprehensive plans were in existence, but that on the grounds of national security he could not speak of them.

Before Dr. Saiki became food specialist of Japan he was attached to the League of Nations Health Office at Geneva. He has lectured at universities in America, Berlin, Hamburg, Paris, South America and before the Royal Society in London.

Something of the pioneer can be seen through his modesty, for he has the ambition of seeing his communal feeding idea adopted in other countries. Perhaps Tadasu Saiki is more important for the Japanese people than three of their generals on the Mongolian frontier put together, but in his own country he is only one link in the chain.

In Japan the country comes well before the individual. Private enterprises are admired, but work

for the nation is everyone's first duty. And that is how Saiki's theory is regarded in Japan. The creation overshadows the creator who is hidden behind it, and the people are never surprised at the greatness of his achievement. They take it for granted. The Japanese accept the scientific achievements of their countrymen as naturally as they adopt foreign civilisations and improve them. In Japan personal virtues are valued more highly than personal talents. Saiki may become a world prophet of nutrition, but not a Japanese prophet. His fate is the fate of many great Japanese.

**PART IV**  
**THE MARCH ON ASIA**



## CHAPTER XXVI

### THE WAY TO UTOPIA

“Room for our surplus population,” “markets for our products,” “source for raw materials,” “a barrier against Communist Russia.” These are the slogans with which the Japanese announce their Utopia. School atlases have for four years shown the Japanese Empire three times bigger than in our atlases; Manchuria is coloured the same as the Japanese islands. Manchukuo is to-day a magic word in Japan.

Gay posters have been put up in the smallest railway stations urging poor Japanese peasants to settle in the new land. Free passage, insurance, and loans are guaranteed. Other posters advertise holidays and sight-seeing trips in the Empire of Manchukuo, and numbers of school and professional parties are taken on conducted tours at the state's expense.

A special institute in Tokyo is training young Japanese for the Manchukuo Government Service and the universities recommend the best pupils of the year to study there. Three hundred students annually pass the official entrance examination in the Manchukuoan Embassy at Tokyo.

The conquest of this huge colonial empire does not go unnoticed in the art of modern Japan, and scenes of Manchukuo are very marked in the picture exhibitions. In the bookshops, travel books, novels and short stories about Manchukuo are on sale. Even the less important newspapers have special correspondents

not only in the large towns in Manchukuo but also in places not shown in our atlases, and the Tokyo papers are continually publishing portraits of Japanese officials who have become secretaries to Chinese ministers, and pictures of the new buildings of Manchukuo, which have of course been erected by Japan. The radio also uses its great influence to entice the people of Japan into this new promised land. Travelling Manchukuoan exhibitions with lecturers touch the loneliest villages, for everyone—the business man, the peasant, the official, the intellectual—must be filled with enthusiasm for the great project.

A large relief map, dotted with small electric bulbs, is laid down on the floor of the exhibition room and is the chief attraction. At the edge there is a long list of names of the fishing grounds, rice plantations, woods and soya-bean fields, together with a row of electric buttons. When the visitor presses the button marked rice, dozens of bulbs in the rice districts light up, and bulbs marking coal fields, gold fields, hunting forests, maize fields, and the haunts of bandits, are lit up in the same way.

The life of the thirty million Chinese living in Manchukuo is portrayed with marionettes to the minutest detail. They are shown in kitchen and field, the peasants' granaries, the material used for their eating utensils, their pots, their clothes, and how they chew tobacco, nothing is forgotten.

Stuffed examples of Manchukuo's wild and domestic animals are arranged along the walls which are decorated with the hundreds of different woods of the rich forests. All these are exhibited for the benefit of the Japanese business men, as well as the mineral wealth,

which is displayed in long rows of bottles as in a chemist's shop.

The remaining wall space is filled up with enlarged photographs of priests of the temple of Jehol, the new monumental buildings in the capital, Hsingking, Japanese sentries with fixed bayonets, or the head-dress of a Mongolian princess. This is how a new colony is introduced.

I travelled in company with soldiers, government officials, peasants, workmen and adventurers in one of the finest steamers of the Osaka-Shosen-Kaisha line, across the Strait of Korea to the Gulf of Petchili. Our first stop was Dairen, the great ice-free port of the Japanese Kwantung Colony. The fort of Port Arthur, scene of the great battle, is not far off. Dairen is also a trophy of the Russo-Japanese War for it was Japan's key to Manchuria.

A large white notice at the harbour-bar forbids, in the name of the Japanese Minister for War, sketching, surveying and photography. Dairen is a fortified port, and the foreigner is bombarded by detectives' questions. Military police, secret police, constables, and water police, ask him whether he has any connections with Russia, and from then on he is continually threatened by the spy complex of the Japanese detective. They persist in offering their services gratis as guides through Dairen's life by day and by night. "Where are you going now, what are you going to do this afternoon, where have you just been, what did you do this morning?" and a dozen other questions are fired at you in the hotel hall. Then the detectives stir up the local newspapers and wherever you go notices appear in the Press.



After the Russo-Japanese war, Japan took over Dairen, which was still blue prints, but with Japanese thoroughness they carried out the ingenious plan drawn up by the Russian engineers, Kرباتsh and Sahorov, and to-day tramways, big cars and motor-buses glide over the smooth streets. Magnificent large stores, in the American style, and blocks of offices tower up along the straight streets. Smart limousines are drawn up before the Yamato Hotel, one of the many luxury hotels owned by the South Manchurian Railway which are found in all the large towns. Dignified Chinamen, sleek Japanese and tall Russians pass through the doors.

During thirty years the plans for opening up Manchuria were prepared here and now it is the turn of North China.

The Japanese Semi-Fascist, Matsuoka, the young president of the South Manchurian Railway, is a frequent visitor at the Yamato. It was he who led the Japanese delegation out of the conference hall at the League of Nations and to-day he is the chief exponent of Japan's aggressive Chinese policy. He also superintends the Manchurian Central Laboratory, where Japanese scientists analyse and experiment with the soil, plants, coal, soya-beans and humanity of Manchuria.

The principal foodstuff of the far East, the soya-bean, comes from Manchukuo, and is exported from Dairen. It is an important product for Japan, for it is eaten at every meal. One pound of soya-bean flour supplies more nourishment than two pounds of meat and a pound of wheaten flour, and its oil is universally used in Japanese industry. It is used

in petrol, linoleum, soap, films, varnish and even in explosives. Soya-bean cakes manure the fields of Eastern Asia. Unknown before the War, the industrial countries of Europe are now intensely interested in this bean and Germany is one of its largest importers from Manchuria. Agriculturists believe that it will bring about an economic revolution and it seems possible that it will play as important a role in the twentieth century as the potato did in the seventeenth century. Now that she owns Manchukuo, Japan controls seventy per cent. of the world's output.

Naked Chinese coolies work night and day in Dairen's hundred soya-bean mills. At the mill gates carts unload their sacks of soya-beans which are refined into oil and moved down to the quay in steel barrels, and what is left is used for cakes.

As a strike in Dairen would imperil Japan's industry, a Japanese coolie company, Fukusho Kako Kaisha, has built a separate town for the Chinese dockers outside Dairen. Fourteen thousand of these dockers live there. There is one section for bachelors, and another for married men and their families; they have their own temple, cemetery, hospital and school, and through this centralisation the coolies are kept in the hollow of the authorities' hands.

A straight road runs through the walls of the bachelor district and ends at a Buddhist temple. The uniform blocks of flats that line the street are somewhat similar to European working quarters, but inside they are squalid. Each dwelling consists of one dismal big room, furnished with built-in "kangs" which resemble European sofas, covered with dirty mats. There the coolies have to sit and sleep amidst a jumble of umbrellas which hang above

their beds, rags, bird-cages, soap advertisements and all kinds of rubbish.

Perhaps these poor coolies are happy in spite of their surroundings. Some days they have to work for fourteen hours, others not at all, but it is all one to them, for they have contracted to work for the coolie company for a number of years and they have sold themselves body and soul for that period. They earn on an average seventy Japanese sen per day, and by the time they have paid for room, food, and clothing, they have about thirteen sen over. They have to live on rice bread, onions, and soya-bean pudding. Meat is only served on important feast days.

The married district belongs to the coolie middle-class. The coolies' bosses live there with their families, and they have to pay the wages and attend to their colleagues' "team spirit." These leaders are true members of the middle class, and live in small, clean family houses among European furniture and a great many ugly gew-gaws; they earn as much as Japanese officials.

The obsequious detectives were on the platform when we left Dairen, to belabour us with questions and to take notes. We were on our way to the capital of Manchukuo, Hsingking. The stream-lined engine, "Super Express Asia," was made in Dairen, and the comfortable sleeping cars, the writing and reading rooms in the observation car, and the expensive paper embossed with Manchurian designs, were all made in Japan.

We slid through fertile plains of soya-beans and millet. For centuries the peoples of Asia have fought for this granary. Chenghis Khan's hordes stormed

through this country which at one time belonged to the Kings of Korea and later to the Mongolian Emperors who ruled China. It takes its name from the Manchus, a noble, war-like race who migrated three hundred years ago to Peking and drove out the Ming dynasty and placed the first Manchu Emperor on the dragon throne. The Manchus reigned over all China, although they were in a small minority, till the revolution of 1912, and now the Emperor Puyi, the last of the Manchus, has returned, by the grace of Japan, to rule over the land of his ancestors.

The peace treaty after the Russo-Japanese war, made over Russia's rights in Manchuria to Japan, including the Dairen-Chang Chun railway and a strip of land on either side of the line. This enabled the Japanese to post fifteen soldiers on every square kilometre to guard the line, and the company's property in the towns was granted rights of extra territoriality. As soon as they took over the railway, the Japanese Government began to invest all their available funds there in mines, factories, agricultural stations, hospitals, schools and universities. Japanese influence penetrated, in the years that followed, far from the railway. Millions were invested throughout country that belonged to China—but only on paper.

Nanking's power no longer extended as far north as Moukden and Charbin, for Chinese generals ruled as independent potentates over the eastern provinces. They terrorised the inhabitants with their armies, and this immense country began to slip through China's fingers.

Then came the final move in 1931, when one of the habitual differences between Chinese troops and the Japanese guards was inflated to an incident.

England had gone off the gold standard and world interest was fixed on the stock exchanges. On September 18th Japan seized her chance; the railway militia was reinforced with 150,000 men and Japan wrested Manchuria from China.

The officers of the army of occupation took on the management of the state. Through the agency of a handful of Chinese men of straw they proclaimed that "by the spontaneous will of thirty million Chinese, Manchus, and Mongolians" Manchuria had been made the independent state, Manchukuo. The same figure-heads, on the advice of the officers, recalled the young ex-Emperor of China from exile and made him chief executive of the Empire and later Emperor. The former Henry Puyi became Emperor Kangte, and Japan and Manchukuo signed a military treaty for common defence of their frontiers.

This country, which is larger than Germany, France, Belgium and England together, was won for Japan by her army from one day to the other, and Japanese soldiers are guarding nowadays the frontiers, at Habarowsk and Mongolia, of what is virtually a Japanese colony.

Even from the train one can see who is master. The engine takes one through a country of thirty million Chinamen and two hundred thousand Japanese, but there is not the slightest doubt as to who rules.

In the first-class compartments no Chinese are seen. Japanese officers get in and out at the stations, and a few industrialists are the only civil passengers. In the second-class sixty per cent. of the passengers are Japanese and the rest Chinese, and it is not until we come to the third class that the Chinese are in a





majority. They compose about seventy per cent. of the third-class passengers.

A special seat is reserved in every first and second-class compartment for an armed Japanese soldier, and in the third class there are several. Plain clothes detectives are everywhere.

The small stations, with their barricades of sand-bags, look like miniature fortresses, and soldiers with fixed bayonets are on guard when trains arrive. Forbidding concrete towers have been built on all the bridges. In the middle of the soya-bean fields I saw grave-stones.

In Moukden station we witnessed a religious procession. As a train pulled in, some three dozen soldiers and a few civilians bowed to the ground and an urn containing the earthly remains of a Japanese soldier, who had fallen fighting bandits, were passed into a first-class compartment for burial in Tokyo.

Near the station at Kun-Chu-Ling, the country is relieved with gardens. The experimental laboratories of the largest agricultural station of the South Manchurian Railway are situated in the fields nearby, and the Japanese research workers are to be seen wandering through the fields in their white coats.

But the landscape soon became flat and monotonous again, and the whole country looked for all the world like a huge fortress.

The Japanese officers try to explain to the foreigners during this ten-hour journey that Japan has a divine right to Manchuria. They used the well-worn phrases, but they believe that they are speaking the truth. According to them, Japan has lost a hundred men on the plains of Manchuria. She has fought two victorious wars to win the country for civilisation,



and now it is cultivated and almost rid of bandits, Japan has invested part of her people's heritage in Manchukuo, and now she requires Manchukuo's minerals and agricultural products. Possession of this country has become a question of life and death for her, and in addition, Japan needs a Japanese Manchukuo as a "bulwark against Bolshevism."

These were the arguments that the Japanese officers had told us before we arrived in Hsingking, formerly Changchun, now the new capital. All notices were written in Chinese, Japanese, English and Russian, and before we had stepped on to the platform the detectives had rushed up again.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### PORTRAIT OF AN EMBRYO TOWN

A BRIGHTLY lit tunnel led out to the station square where pony-cabs and a few taxis waited for fares.

This place was a Mongolian prince's grazing ground last century, and only a few years ago it was a dirty, insignificant Eastern Chinese town called Changchun, which owed its existence to the railway. But now it is called Hsingking, or New Capital, and the inevitable Yamato Hotel, the centre of the town's society, confronts the outgoing passengers. Left from the Yamato lies old Changchun, where the Emperor Puyi lives inconspicuously, and right is the new metropolis, the Japanese town that enjoys extra-territoriality rights.

This town of diligent Japanese business men and officials is also a babel of pleasure where buildings are being put up and paid for. Bars, in the American and Parisian style, have sprung up everywhere and *geishas*, waitresses and prostitutes have been imported from Osaka and other Japanese provincial towns. Concerts by well-known Japanese singers are advertised on the hoardings and thousands of Japanese go to laugh over the antics of a Japanese comedian who has copied Charlie Chaplin. Expensive cars fill the Hsingking's main street, which is nearly as wide and well paved as Regent Street, yet they drive alongside of rickshaws and Siberian pony-carts, and Chinese and Japanese wearing mandarine robes,

kimonos or English suits "made in Japan," thread their way in and out of the traffic which is regulated by Chinese policemen in brand new khaki uniforms.

Rows of two-armed silver lamps and poplars line the streets, and the walls of the new residential town can be seen from the main boulevards.

The impressive building of the Japanese embassy, the largest in the world, stands like a fortress frowning down on the old and new towns. The ambassador also commands the Japanese troops in Manchukuo and the embassy is the headquarters of the Japanese Kwangtung army. The typically Japanese roof on this otherwise western building is a symbol of the marriage of East and West.

Swimming pools, tennis courts and baseball grounds have already been built in the new town, and games are in full force in the midst of scaffolding. Shinto priests are liable to be hit between the eyes when they are dedicating the foundation stone of a Japanese altar, and high up on the scaffolding the Chinese coolies can be seen building. This work goes on night and day in Hsingking.

Coolies from Shantung are building the new town, and their bodies were still dark brown although when I was there, the autumn winds had begun. Although the workmen who had to call on the spirits to keep them from breaking down under the weight of the blocks of stone they had to carry were Chinese, it was the Japanese who gave the orders.

The Chinese coolie in Manchuria works in the spirit of the New Japan. Although he sleeps on straw mats before improvised fireplaces, he draws higher wages than he could ever get in China. He has to drive over-laden carts, but the Siberian ponies are harnessed

as for an Imperial crowning festival, and they are decorated with the colours of Japan and Manchukuo, to show they are working for both countries. The first Manchukuoan monuments ought to be erected to these ponies, but when monuments are considered in Hsingking, horses will have been forgotten in the stream of cars that are already being built in factories specially erected in Yokohama for the export trade to Manchukuo.

Winter in Manchukuo interrupts building activities, and with its approach the coolies work increasingly quickly.

The headquarters of the Japanese engineers and architects, the real brains of the town, are in the building offices of the town, Capital Constructions-Bureau. There are almost no Chinese in this department. Japanese pore night and day over drawing boards, advising and drawing unceasingly. When stones are being selected Japanese cards are attached to all the samples giving the names of Japanese contractors, all of whom are hoping that the building of some road may be allotted to them. The lucky ones will become millionaires the next day.

Vacation students in black uniforms from Japanese universities jumped out of yellow motor buses, and Manchukuo's chief of propaganda conducted them on to the roof of the builders' offices to tell them how this remarkable town took shape.

In September, 1932, the Emperor of Manchukuo gave the order to build the Capital Constructions Bureau. Two five year plans were to see the new capital completed, and although at that time only a few years had gone by, a modern town had already

arisen from the steppeland. The chief of propaganda swept his hand over the seven great avenues which divided the new town into districts. The Imperial Bank had cost six and a half million yen and the Privy Council two millions. The Imperial palace, the telegraph office and the ministries were just as expensive, but in 1935 alone they were able to build three thousand dwelling houses. There is twice as much Japanese as Chinese capital in the new houses, and every week delegations return to Tokyo to find shareholders for new speculations.

After seeing over Capital Constructions Bureau, we visited the golf course, the parks and the sites for libraries and museums. And only three years ago corncobs were growing there!

We did not return to the Yamato Hotel until late. A pony pulled our trap with difficulty along the muddy road. Although there were no buildings the two-armed silver lamps already lined the road, swinging in the breeze and reflecting their lights in the puddles.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### JAPANESE COMMAND—CHINESE OBEY

THE Japanese are not content to build roads and palaces only. They want also to build a new Chinese type who will become a pattern for all Chinese, and the whole energy of the Japanese people is co-operating to make respectable settlers of Manchukuo's thirty millions within fifteen years. It is important for Japan's vested interests that these settlers shall be thoroughly civilised importers of Japanese goods. They must be men who have been educated up to the requirements of the twentieth century, and one day when the experiment has ended successfully, the thirty millions will be an example of Japan's colonising skill for the 400 millions in the rest of China.

The Japanese decided that the Chinese in Manchukuo were Manchurians, not Chinese, and they stress this point vigorously to the inhabitants, believing that these poor settlers will eventually be convinced of the fact.

Japan rules supreme in Manchukuo, but to keep up appearances, ministers, provincial governors and mayors are Chinese, who had to be drawn from Peking and South China owing to the small number of educated people among the settlers. All these dignitaries' assistants are Japanese, nominally in the service of the government of Manchukuo, and although the dignitaries may sometimes have Chinese secretaries, a Japanese is always attached to them as well, and it is he who prepares the papers for the minister to sign.

Education is also under Japanese control, and Japanese is one of the most important subjects. In the textbooks the Japanese are praised as liberators of the people, and the schools are run on entirely Japanese lines. Three hundred and twenty-five of the three hundred and forty-one Chinese students sent by the government to foreign universities went to Japan.

Wherever one goes one feels the energy of the Japanese people which was shut up for centuries in their island home and is now being let loose on Manchukuo. They have fallen to work with fanatical zeal and they are forcing the dreamy Chinese to keep pace. "Ichi . . . ni . . . san, ichi . . . ni . . . san," shouts the Japanese gymnastic instructor and his words are translated by a Chinese interpreter. The young Chinese policemen, whom he teaches, bend their knees in order to achieve a military bearing. After the exercises follows kendo, the Japanese form of fencing, and, standing opposite each other in rows, the men cross poles at the word of command. Then they learn ju-jitsu, and it is astonishing how quickly the Chinese learn this Japanese art. They bluff each other with clever hand movements until one of them throws his opponent to the ground with a clever blow. They are taught how to handle a law breaker by watching one of their number being lashed together by a Japanese policeman in Manchukuoan uniform. Exercises over, the students go in for lectures.

The police college has been established in an old prison building and the director is, of course, Japanese. Also when a Japanese gives a lecture a Chinese interpreter in a long robe stands at his side.

Manchukuo requires a hundred thousand policemen, and since the soldiers of the former Chinese







generals were not trustworthy the hundred thousand have had to be recruited and trained from the beginning. But director Yamada can make, according to him, a good policeman out of a peasant or a clerk within sixty days.

The Manchukuoan army is trained in the same way. A few hundred Japanese officers drill the hundred thousand men. The Minister for War asked his colleagues in Tokyo to grant him this "favour."

Japanese experts are posted in all the forty agricultural stations to instruct the peasant in modern methods, and Japanese doctors are demonstrating to the Chinese the advantages of modern medicine.

A Japanese opium-dictator sits in the Ministry of the Interior. He began in 1932 to suppress drugs in Manchukuo. In November of that year the government, at his suggestion, made opium a state monopoly, and, according to statistics, the dictator ought to have cleared the country of opium within fifty years. Formosa is proof of this, for within forty years the island was rid of the pest. Manchukuo's largest opium home is an hour away by car from Hsingking. The inmates, pale, bald Chinese, live behind the high walls weaving, or working in the fields, and in one room some are chained to their bunks. The Japanese doctors adopt a radical cure instead of the slow method and their panacea is work, and more work. Only curable cases are accepted in this home, and although the patients may be harshly treated, the ruthless methods are successful. When they are cured each patient has to register his fingerprints before leaving and promise to abjure opium.

Those smokers who are condemned to opium for the rest of their lives have to obtain their supplies

from the government, and are not allowed to smoke at home. But they may go to the public opium saloons at any hour of the day and lie in delirium. Those who can afford it can rent private cells. Manchukuo has no time for hopeless cases so they are permitted to smoke themselves to death.

Neither money nor energy is spared in propagating the new civilisation, and a Japanese is naturally in charge of the publicity. Pamphlets are dropped from aeroplanes to the small towns and the inhabitants who can read are kept informed of the new government's progress. And the five-coloured national flag is dropped, one for every house, with the propaganda.

In the villages the work of propaganda requires the diligence of Sisyphus, for in lonely parts the Chinese peasants can neither read nor write, and have never seen a foreigner. They do not know that Tokyo and Nanking are in different countries, they do not even know of their existence. They usually imagine that China is still ruled by the Emperor in Peking, and when they are shown a photograph of the Emperor Puyi, they have no idea who he is, but the Japanese want to educate these people, so that they will buy Japanese tractors, ride Japanese bicycles and install radio sets and the other excitements of the twentieth century. Gramophones and records are supplied to the owners of these mudhouses free of cost, and those who cannot read or write can hear in their own dialect the words of the magic boxes: "You are a new Chinaman! You are a Manchukuoan! You are living in the sun of a new nation! Your empire is the country of the future! We are helping you!"

## CHAPTER XXIX

### PARADISE OF ALL PEOPLES?

WHAT will happen to this Empire which is now being developed at such a pace should it not become a Japanese colony? The government announced that Manchukuo would be a sanctuary for all peoples, and all nationalities are invited to settle there, and buy land, and be naturalised.

Experiments have lately been made with mixed settlements of Japanese, Chinese and Koreans for the purpose of forwarding friendly relations and covering up the minority rule of the Japanese. But I could guess at the attitude of the different races in Hsing-king. At least when our pony cart was embedded to the axle in mud; the horse struggled desperately but the Chinese who inhabited the mud houses at the side of the road only gaped at us without trying to help.

On the way to Kuanchentzu we met Japanese and Chinese soldiers returning from campaigns against the bandits, and Japanese women with jet black hair and powdered faces, riding in oxen carts. Several hundred white Russians live in Kuanchentzu. There are 80,000 of them altogether in Manchukuo. We met them in the streets mixing with Koreans who dragged their snow white robes through the thick mud. A barber was at work in the open street.

The white Russians are principally guardsmen who reached Charbin on their flight from Russia, but as Charbin is a centre of the Russian bourgeoisie they

came on to this smaller town. Former Soviet Russian employees of East Chinese Railway which Russia sold to Manchukuo after so much trouble still live in Kuanchentzu, which is the railway terminus.

These Russians live under the same authorities as three Mongolian races, but there is no sense of unity among them. The notices in the shops are in four languages, but each nationality deals with its own countrymen, except the Koreans, who do not deal at all, for they are very poor. And even the Russians are divided into white and red camps. The children are the only exception.

The White Russian school is a scene of friendly international relations. The Chinese and Japanese stare through the windows at the fair children and their teacher inside and exchange smiles with them. The Chinese are bare foot and in rags, and the Japanese in clean kimonos, but they are all happy!

The teacher at this school is in a quiet way regarded as a hero in Kuanchentzu. She spends all her time in the school, for the children arrive early and leave late, and have come to look on it as Russia. An image of the Virgin and a crucifix hang on the walls, and the holy flame is never extinguished. The teachers sometimes draw a coloured picture of the Kremlin, for although her pupils are growing up in mud-huts she is determined that they shall know something of Russian architecture. Next to the picture of the Emperor of Manchukuo, whose guests they are, hangs a portrait of Czar Nicholas the Second.

The school's most treasured possession is a faded map of Holy Russia. There is only a worn mark where Moscow ought to be, because so many fingers pointed it out. The teacher writes all the school

books, with the help of some of the older pupils, from memory.

I have never seen so many holy pictures in a village church as I saw at a Russian wedding in Kuanchentzu. They must have been collected from twenty different churches in Siberia. There was only one Japanese, who was a friend of the bridegroom, present. The bellringer was one of those naturals portrayed so well in Dostoevsky's novels.

After the ceremony we went on to a reception at Chumakow's, a former officer of the Czar and the local leader of the White Russians. The samovar hissed and although I had to talk in my halting Japanese, we understood each other.

Chumakov drives every fortnight to Charbin to get help from the prosperous Russians there in support of the Kuanchentzu colony and he accompanied us back to the Yamato Hotel, in Hsingking.

He told us on the way how the uncertainty during both peace and war had worn down the White Russians. Chinese bandits were continually raiding Japanese troop transports. Japan suspected Russia and had the Soviet Russians in Charbin arrested. Russia made protests in Tokyo, and Japan made protests in Moscow. And now arises every day the question of Outer Mongolia. Japan is knocking on the door of a closed country which in reality is a Russian "Manchukuo." Stalin warns Tokyo, Tokyo warns Stalin. "And what is it all leading to?" asked my Russian friend. If Russia is defeated a part of his former fatherland goes to Japan, but he will still be a Russian. That is his dilemma.

When we reached the Yamato a Japanese officer was waiting for him.

## CHAPTER XXX

### HOTEL YAMATO, HSINGKING

As it was a fine evening, dinner was served that night in the garden. Kubota, a hotel page, played the gramophone. Although he went to an intermediate school in Japan he speaks better English than some of the Imperial ministers of Manchukuo. A record of Lucien Boyer was put on. A pretty Japanese lady wearing a Chanel model was laughing behind me. At the next table the minister of the Imperial Household, dressed in the costume of a Chinese mandarin, was chatting with his young colleague, Chang, Foreign Minister, who wore western clothes. A great many foreign visitors had arrived that afternoon. Men on every kind of business and, above all, journalists.

Manchukuo has for years been in danger from within and without, and officialdom lives in a perpetual state of alarm. This hotel is a good observation point, for all the foreign journalists are attracted to it. Many of them, unfortunately, are the kind of writers who have come to make as much out of their experience as possible. The Japanese do not take that sort very seriously, and they know exactly how much each is paid by the Manchurian government, but as soon as a full-blown journalist arrives, they think that he is a spy. As a matter of fact, everyone thinks that everyone else is a spy in Hsingking, and the foreign journalists sit like cats on hot bricks.

So long as they stick to questions about the country's cultural problems, they are left alone, but as soon as they try to investigate mobilisation strength, iron, aluminium, petrol, car registration numbers, the Press department of the Japanese Embassy, which controls every journalist whether he likes it or not, stops their activities.

Mr. Hirano, a member of the Press department, speaks and writes Japanese, English, French, German and Hungarian with equal facility and now he is learning Russian and Chinese. It is his business that the journalists see Manchukuo as Japan wants them to see it. When I was in the Yamato he was watching the beautiful Madame A. F., who looked nervous. She was supposed to be the correspondent of a French paper, but she spoke Russian as well as French, and it was reported that after lunching in the hotel she ate a second meal in the Russian Café Modern. The previous day she had gone with two Russian dancers to Kuanchentzu. It was suspected that she was a spy. The next day she went to Charbin, again a Russian centre. The police were informed and all the guests in the Yamato were on tenter-hooks.

There is suspicion on all sides, and the longer the expected agreement with Russia is delayed the deeper it grows. The Hotel Yamato is the detectives' headquarters. The servants on every floor are agents and there is more whispering there than in any other hotel in the world. The detectives even watch the members of the Japanese embassy on behalf of the Japanese consulate, and the consulate is in turn responsible to the embassy. And the relationship between civilians and the army is no clearer. The



country's development rests now with the civilians, and the military who brought Manchukuo under Japanese rule are already seeing that they are not reaping their expected reward, but in the end the man who wields the sword must triumph.

At dinner one night the sound of machine gun fire burst in on the hotel garden. Searchlights scoured the sky picking out squadrons of aeroplanes; the red circles on their wings marked them as Japanese. The sky darkened again, but the anti-aircraft practice went on throughout the night.

Three cars flashed up to the hotel door. Japanese soldiers with fixed bayonets sat in the first and third cars and the most powerful man in Manchukuo sprang out of the middle car—His Excellency, the governor of the Kwangtung Leased Territory, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Manchukuo, and commanding general of the Japanese troops in Asia. He is responsible, in this threefold capacity, for the domination of the Japanese forces over all the peoples of Manchukuo.

When the great man hurried into the banqueting room, the page was playing Japanese folk songs on the gramophone. Three hundred officers sat down to dinner and as they talked and smiled, the searchlights lit up the sky and messengers constantly came in to speak to the Ambassador. Eighty cavalry officers of the Chinese Manchukuoan army were reported to have mutinied at Ch——. They had withdrawn to the mountains and had joined forces with bandits. Three Japanese had disappeared at Hailar and it was suspected that they had been taken across the Russian frontier. Everything was in order at Jehol; four Mongolian tribes had paid homage to

the Japanese general. The Mongolian cavalry school would be opened shortly. The Minister for War in Tokyo wanted to speak to the ambassador on the telephone in twenty minutes.

Although the General knew that Japan's interest was centred upon him, he continued to eat with his officers, for the Japanese cling to ceremony at the most critical times. In this way he recalls the great Japanese generals of the past who held tea ceremonials between battles.

The news spread like lightning that Dr. U., the famous Tokyo manipulative surgeon, had arrived and had ordered his meal to be brought up to his room. This man can Westernise Mongolian eyes by tapping a layer of fat in the eye-lids. Rumour has it that Dr. U., specialises in spies, and can make men's faces look like women's and change the colour of their eyes. A Japanese, it is said, has already journeyed through Soviet Russia disguised as a Russian with blue eyes.

The hotel was now nearly full, but the management rose to the occasion and telephoned for sleeping cars. When they arrived they were kept at the station opposite and used as an annexe—an event which had not happened since the Emperor was crowned.

## CHAPTER XXXI

### COMEDY AND REALITY

EMPEROR PUYI is the nominal commander in chief of the forces on land and sea and in the air, but in practice he has not much to do with them. He is seldom mentioned, and compared with the bombastic Japanese embassy, his palace might be mistaken for a farm building. Before the advent of Japan it was the offices of the Russian salt monopoly, and the main store room has been converted into a throne room. An easy chair overhung with a canopy and decorated with an orchid, the emblem of the Imperial house, serves as a throne. The court of the orchid Emperor has paled into insignificance although dramatic events are going on outside. Many of the court officials are Japanese and no doubt, even if the court should move to Peking, they would go too.

The Emperor has returned to the throne of his ancestors, but Japan has not yet quite achieved the junction of North China with Manchukuo, nor has she decided whether Puyi should be placed on the throne of the combined countries. Until a decision has been reached, his position is provisional, and he has to watch this comedy unfold. It is more probable that he looks upon it as a tragedy, for his own fate is indissoluble with his country's.

His empire is Chinese and many European states must envy the virtual absence of a minority problem. Only five per cent. of the 32 millions of inhabitants

are not Chinese. The Japanese are only 213,057 strong, and compose one per cent. of the population, yet they have unrestricted control over the country.

The ministers and governors of this independent Manchu empire are satisfied. Most of them were born in Manchuria and they are bound to the country by blood ties, for although they are Chinamen they are, as Manchus, natural rulers of China. This is the position of the Prime Minister, General Chang Ching-Hui. He was in the Wellington Koo-Cabinet as War Minister of China and later as Governor of Charbin. He lived through the chaos of the pre-Japanese years when a Chinese army of three hundred thousand plundered the land, serving not their country but their rival generals. Each province had its own currency, but none was stable and the whole country was flooded with soviet propaganda. The Prime Minister was one of the first to join the movement, which was supported by Japan, for dissolution with China. Japan then helped to put the currency on a sound basis and brought order to the country. Now that the Russian menace has been checked, a feat which the Manchus had not expected to be accomplished for years, it is a matter of secondary importance to them whether the Chinese or Japanese reap the fruits of their labours.

But the Chinese officials and officers who have been drawn from China hate the Japanese colonisers, for they know well enough that they are only puppets, although they discuss affairs with their Japanese advisers in English.

The Japanese have to be even more conscientious in Manchukuo than at home, for the army who would have the country governed according to the

Samurais' code of honour, hangs like the sword of Damocles over their heads.

The Chinese only frequent Japanese hotels when they must, for when the two countries meet awkward silences are very apparent, and as soon as a Japanese comes into a bar the Chinamen lower their voices.

The Chinese in Manchuria only began to notice their natural wealth when Japan staked her reserves in the country and developed it. The Chinese now think that Manchukuo would be a paradise if also international capital could be invested and the Chinese members of the government would encourage British and American industry to have a share, but the difficulty is that the Japanese army's consent is required before building land can be sold, and in spite of the policy of the open door preached by the Japanese diplomats, the army hesitates to allow foreigners to exploit the country.

The Chinese are apt to forget the chaos that gripped the country only a few years ago, and now they deprecate every acre of ground which is not developed. But as Japan requires money for the increased Army and Navy estimates at home, and as the present state of her currency does not allow for unlimited imports of raw material, the pace of her investments is gradually slackening. Another important factor that makes for unrest is that the Chinese feel that as war must inevitably be fought between Russia and Japan on Manchukuoan territory their country has been made an open-air fortress.

I made friends with an intelligent Chinaman, whom I only met at official functions. We could never speak confidentially as we were watched on all sides. A smile never left his face, and he always spoke in the

same polite way. Manchukuo had been his country for three years and he had been appointed to an important position; but he could not leave the country, for although he was no longer a Chinese, his country of adoption was not recognised abroad and he could not obtain a passport. The last time I met him was by chance in a park in Mukden where he could speak freely. Usually inscrutable, he began to talk passionately. "I hate the Japanese. And I am not the only one. All Chinese feel as I do. Japanese and Chinese are alike fire and water. They can never be united.

"We gave them our many thousand-years-old culture, our writing, philosophy, literature, everything, but do you think that they can give us culture to-day? And the only thanks we got was to have our country taken bit by bit when we were powerless. When the European countries cried a halt with their imperialistic policies, the Japanese arrived in the rôle of brothers only to attack us as well as the Europeans. We can never forgive a sister nation for that, even if some of them regret their action, for it is too late now, and they have forfeited our trust.

"I am regarded as a traitor in Nanking, but we officials in Manchukuo have remained Chinese, and we shall not become 'Manchurian.' We hoped for better things when Manchukuo was founded, and we believed that our dream of becoming an independent Chinese state, on friendly terms with China proper, would materialise. China has always neglected Manchuria, for it was too far away, so we had nothing against Japanese help, but the last thing that we wanted was to be a Japanese colony.

"We welcomed the western civilisation which the

Japanese brought with them and we were delighted with every house that was built, with every field laid out, and with every yen that was invested. We were glad, too, to have our frontiers protected from the communists, and although we realised that Japan was carrying out these plans for her own good, they were *de facto* helping us. The Chinese nation is four thousand years old and after surviving so long we are not likely to go under now. All we need is time, and we do not think in decades as the Japanese do, but in centuries. Rest assured in a hundred years Manchuria will not be a Japanese colony. I am working for the year 2036 and no matter what my countrymen may say, my conscience is clear.

“In the long run the Japanese will fall foul over the racial question. Everyone knows how quickly the Chinese population is growing in Manchuria and the Japanese propaganda brings far more poor Chinese settlers than Japanese to the country. By the end of this century we Chinese will number a hundred million instead of thirty million, while the Japanese will not have increased very much. Since the Japanese began to immigrate thirty years ago, only two hundred thousand of them, as compared with twenty million Chinese, have settled here. If the Japanese want to increase their immigration they will have to level up the Chinese peasant's living standard considerably and level down the Japanese standards, before the two races will work together in harmony. Even so they can hardly hope to outnumber the rapidly increasing Chinese. In a hundred years' time the Chinese whom Japan is now educating will have become a hundred million of civilised people and a few million Japanese cannot

hope to stem such a mass. The Japanese army will not hold this new people in check so easily as the thirty million backward people of to-day. We will then absorb the Japanese, they will have to withdraw their army and we will protect our own frontiers. And when we are a great people we may unite with China and perhaps govern it.

"An earthquake might at any time destroy Japan's power, or she might become involved in a war with America or Russia. Then Manchukuo's opportunity may come sooner."

When I left him he gave me a chain of five addresses to which I can address him if I write to him. Although he is an official of the Manchukuo government, he has to conduct his private correspondence with the help of confidential friends.

However, officials and army officers do not represent the Manchukuo people, eighty-five per cent. of whom work on the land. Before the Japanese conquered the country, these peasants had their property plundered by Chinese soldiers, but now they are left in peace and are not bled with taxes. It is a matter of indifference to them whether they pay their taxes to Chinese or Japanese, as long as they are not too high, so it cannot be assumed that Manchuria suffers under the Japanese régime.

The Japanese realise that they can only expect hate from the Chinese bureaucrats, and they go warily, for they want at all costs to keep the country under their heel.

The Japanese are convinced that the Manchukuo experiment will only be successful if plans are carried out at fanatical speed before their national resources are exhausted, and for that reason they dare not give



over its direction to the Chinese, who are not gifted with powers of organisation. They play their comedy of camouflaged power with great skill, and, with its background of dynamic reality, it could not be acted in a more suitable theatre than Eastern Asia. The Japanese take pains to cover the Chinese ministers with honours and to maintain the decorum that is so characteristic of the East.

The Japanese ambassador is the only official foreign representative in Manchukuo, for Japan is the only power that has recognised the country, and when he arrives in full-dress uniform at the Emperor's receptions, his suite is so magnificent that the representatives of every state in the world seem to be standing in the throne room.

Military garden parties, arranged by the Japanese, are another method of furthering friendly relations. Tents are erected and all the officers of the Japanese Kwantung army stationed in Hsingking, and of the Chino-Manchukuo army are invited. The Japanese ambassador and the Manchurian War Minister are the hosts. Chinese dancing girls entertain the Japanese and geishas attend on the Chinese officers.

Conversation flows between conquered and conquerors. The Japanese give a charming impression of equality, but equivocal smiles play on the faces of the Chinese, who never forget their age-old ancestry.

The generals' race is the high spot of the party. The ambassador, the Minister for War, and all the other generals present race down the course carrying lanterns. His Excellency, the Japanese Ambassador experienced difficulty with lighting his lantern and,





all smiles, finished last. A Chinese girl and a geisha plied him with *saké* and beer.

And everyone smiled.

Bandits still terrorise some parts of Manchukuo, and the houses of the Japanese settlers have to be fortified. In the Chiumassu district there are five hundred Japanese settlers who carry arms slung bizarrely over their pretty kimonos.

The bandits wage constant guerilla warfare against the new régime. Some have been driven to their desperate profession by hunger, but the most dangerous type are the soldiers of the former Chinese generals who unite for patriotic reasons. In the Mukden Province at the time of General Chang Hsue-liang there were 20,000 bandits; a year after Japan took over, their number was increased to 150,000 by the general's soldiers who refused to recognise the new government. In a year's time the Japanese were able to suppress their numbers to 40,000 and by 1935 only 12,000 remained.

The outlaws threaten the new Empire by holding up trains, kidnapping foreigners, and killing and stealing.

Whenever possible the Japanese treat with them, and instead of shooting them down, give them food and work or enlist them in the army with good pay. These humane methods have proved so successful that the property of the South Manchurian Railway has been made safe, and the North is the only danger point to-day.

In spite of what people may say, Manchuria is a matter of life and death for Japan. She must expand or explode, and it was obvious that China did not

depend on Manchuria. Indeed they only possessed it on paper. Japan is not dispensing education out of humanistic motives alone; it is obviously to her own advantage that the thirty millions of Chinese should read and write.

If Japan should lose interest in Manchuria it would certainly be occupied by some other nation. China would, in any case, not get it, so perhaps the present situation is the best guarantee for peace in the Far East.

Coolies in China live a life unworthy of humanity, but their brothers in Manchuria have progressed, for Japan, no matter how selfish her motives are, has given them something to live for. Two different philosophies have driven a wedge between the Chinese and Japanese in Manchukuo; the Chinese are living for the year 2036 and the Japanese must trade if they are to live to-day.

After the annexation of Korea, Manchuria was the starting point of the Japanese march on Asia, and their latest sally has succeeded. China and the whole world were powerless when the *fait accompli* of the new Prussianised empire was made known to the world. Economically not all Japan's hopes have been fulfilled, for although her exports to Manchukuo rose between 1930 and 1933 from 120,408,971 gold yen to 338,000,000; 1935 saw another improvement. But nevertheless she cannot obtain sufficient raw materials from Manchukuo, so her interest has focused on Northern China's supplies.

The new prime minister of Japan, Hirota, is a cold-blooded diplomat of great qualities, but he is an imperialist, and he associates with the supporters of the aggressive China policy.

The restless Kwantung army is preparing to advance again, and what has happened in Manchuria will be repeated in North China, which has already slipped through Nanking's fingers. The Japanese advisers have already taken their places in her governments.

Yet North China hates Japan, and Japan will only conquer her natural wealth and trade with fierce fighting.

The Japanese propaganda has begun again, and the officers tell their men, "We are not marching against China and all Asia, but for them. Our race is the mediator between East and West, and the armies of our civilisation follow hard on the heels of the soldiers. When we threw open Manchuria we started the preparation of the peoples of Asia for the time when they will not meet their Western brothers on the footing of exploited pariahs, but as equals. We want to bring to the swarming millions of coolies the advantages of our time. Europe and America have had more than a hundred years to help China, but they have hung fire. Their civilisation proved ineffective but when it has come through the Japanese melting pot and been moulded anew, it will be successful. Asia must belong to the East!"

These are the propaganda slogans, but when Asia is claimed for the East the Japanese mean to lead. Their standards will advance without serious interruption although the penetration of Northern China will be more difficult than in Manchukuo.

The five northern provinces have a population of about eighty million people who are not just poor settlers as was the case in Manchukuo, for they have a centre of culture in Peking. They have a national consciousness and will hate their conquerors. The

Chinese have always hated the Mongol and Manchu emperors who have sat on the dragon throne for centuries, but they allowed them to rule and in the end they absorbed them into their own race. Now the Chinese are watching the Japanese advance with apathetic antagonism.

Peking, the dreaming town of legends, felt safe two years ago before the threat of the Japanese; now she is afraid, but she fears the industrialisation of the twentieth century more than the Japanese. But in Asia the Japanese are the messengers of the twentieth century.

There are plenty of poor illiterates in North China who can also be educated to wear Japanese suits and write with Japanese fountain pens, and Japan has set out to bring up their living standards to the necessary standard. That is the real motive behind Japan's march on Asia.

**PART V**  
**THE SPIRIT**





## CHAPTER XXXII

### THE LESSON OF THE VOLCANOES

IN no other land are soil and people so closely united as in Japan, and although the Japanese are the captives of their machines they are also the children of their snow-capped mountains. One marvels at their quiet smiles and their inscrutability, but it is twice as wonderful to know that they are anything but calm, and for that reason they sit by the hour over their ceremonial teas.

But just as fifty volcanoes are active under the green Japanese earth and just as they break out on the surface, the fiery temperaments behind these smiling faces also require outlets. Every Japanese goes through bouts of irritability which they spend, if possible, in isolation. The first foreigners who entered Japan in the middle of last century did not understand that the slightest insult must be atoned for by death. Europeans and Americans bullied their Japanese servants, and when they smiled back, their masters stormed all the more and beat the servants, who would then retaliate with knives. The ability of the Japanese to surge up in a second from calm to rage can easily be understood if they are watched when they fence.

I once saw twelve officers practising in a Tokyo military college. They were grouped in pairs, wearing visors and armed with bamboo sticks. On a signal from the referee they bent forward and on the second signal they crossed sticks in serious combat. Their sticks whirled in the air and clashed together. There

was a deafening din of shouting, even louder than the clashing of the sticks. The combatants jumped up and down and fought with such fury that the referee had to stop the contest with his whistle. They immediately became as motionless as Buddhas and bowed to each other as if they were at a garden party.

When we went out to the drill-ground, soldiers were charging with bayonets against straw figures uttering blood-curdling yells. Old Russian officers still tell of the cry of ten thousands of Japanese on the field in Manchuria. Japanese would never retreat before their enemies, and the volcanoes of Japan were personified in these columns of soldiers, but as soon as the battle was won, the Japanese scattered white blossom over the bodies of the fallen Russians.

Earthquakes and volcanoes have formed the restless character of the Japanese, and they have also taught them self-control, and enabled them to develop in spite of their barren soil.

Bushido, the Samurais' moral code has, especially during the two hundred and sixty-five years before the country was opened to foreigners, ruled the Japanese and steeled them for the revolution that has taken place since then. Without Bushido the Japanese people could not have triumphed over their material difficulties, and without a knowledge of Bushido the mystery of the New Japan cannot be plumbed.

Until comparatively recently nothing had been written on Bushido, the moral doctrine of the nation. When President Theodore Roosevelt became interested in the mystery of the sudden rise of Japan, the Japanese Professor Inazo Nitobe published a commentary on Bushido, and the Western world learned for the first time about Japanese morality.

The Samurais read the lessons of Confucius, Mencius and Buddha and adopted all the Chinese ethics—literally. In the course of time these doctrines lost their individuality and developed into a great Japanese ethical system. Bushido, which means the Way of the Knight, became a term for loyalty in the field, heroism, hara-kiri and all the virtues. This new doctrine was preached by the Samurais and took root among rich and poor.

As soon as they were five, the boys were brought up according to its laws. Hunger and cold were considered the speediest route to constancy, and little children had to listen at night as the laws were read out; they had to rise before day-break to learn their lessons before breakfast, and then go bare-footed to their teachers' homes. They were made to visit cemeteries and ruined buildings at night and to witness executions, and then they were compelled to visit the corpse at night and leave a mark on its head.

Every phase of life was governed by the principle of self-sacrifice. The Samurais had to learn to bear everything and at the same time remain cheerful. Nothing must surprise them or make them lose their equanimity; they must smile when they were sad in case they should bring sadness into the breasts of their fellow men for an instant. The eternal smile of the Japanese was born with Bushido.

The ethereal death of the cherry blossom became the symbol of their character. The short life of this flower taught them to look on life as a present and to give it up with grace at any time as one would with a gift. The ancient warriors planted cherry trees in their gardens which blossomed in all colours, and *Hanami*, flower-gazing, became an important word in their language, and the flower of the cherry blossom became

the national flower, the flower of the army. So they found a symbol of their doctrine in the life of a flower.

Professor Nitobe could not understand the Europeans' love for roses. For him they lacked the simplicity of the cherry blossom; their colours were so ostentatious, their scent so strong, and their beauty hid behind thorns; they desired eternal life and died on their stems. How different the cherry blossom was! It disappeared at the command of Nature; it was so tender yet Nature did not need to supply it with any protection; its colours are quiet and its scent does not evaporate.

The ethics of the cherry blossom taught the Japanese to sacrifice human love for principle, placed filial piety before love, and mothers had to learn to sacrifice all their younger children if that would save the eldest child, daughters had to be prepared to sell their maidenhood to pay their father's debts.

Hara-kiri is the kernel of Bushido. Warriors can, by disembowelling themselves, atone for their sins, and redeem their friends. As a special honour, judgments could be carried out by hara-kiri just as other peoples of the East used the silken cord.

Eye-witnesses' accounts of the amazing bravery of the Japanese when they commit hara-kiri still pass from mouth to mouth, and there was one especially moving story of how a Samurai was condemned to death with all the male members of his family, by his own servant, for offending a neighbour. This is how it was told to me.

A gong sounded in the temple which smelt of incense. Gold and silver flowers decorated Buddha's altar. The great image of wood and gold rose up behind. A low throne covered with a red cloth stood on the straw mats which were also laid before the throne. When the priests left the temple, they shut

the doors and it was left empty, the silence only being broken when the gongs were beaten.

When the doors were opened again, sixteen witnesses trooped in and sat down on either side of the altar on the mats, the friends of the offended neighbour on the right, the condemned man's friends on the left. Not even their breathing could be heard. Then the doors opened again and a second procession came in, headed by the victim who was dressed in a Samurai ceremonial kimono. His only son, who was seven, followed him. His best friend whom the warrior had chosen as honorary executioner walked behind with three more men. They all bowed to the witnesses who returned the salute.

The Samurai went up ceremoniously to the throne and sat down with his son, and his friend took up his position on the left. The first second handed the Samurai the poniard on a lacquer tray, and the warrior bowing before it, said to his son, "You must die first, Katsunoske, so that I may be assured that you will submit like a true Samurai."

"I plead you to die first, father, for I do not know the rites. I will watch you and follow the example of a man of honour."

The Samurai thanked his son with a glance and began to speak ceremoniously. "I atone for my action by disembowelling myself. I beg of you to be my witnesses."

He then uncovered his body to the waist and seized the dagger. His fingers clutched the handle and he stuck the blade into the left side of his stomach.

"Stick in the dagger deep, my son, and do not fall backwards for a Samurai must fall forward. Watch! pull the blade to the right and when your strength begins to fail renew it threefold." And as he jerked

the dagger to the right his son followed every movement. "Look well, my son. Now turn round the blade and jerk it upwards and out."

The bloody dagger was on the lacquer tray again and the friend who had been watching breathlessly struck off the warrior's head with a blow of his sword to relieve his agony.

There was a pause and then the son carried out the penalty.

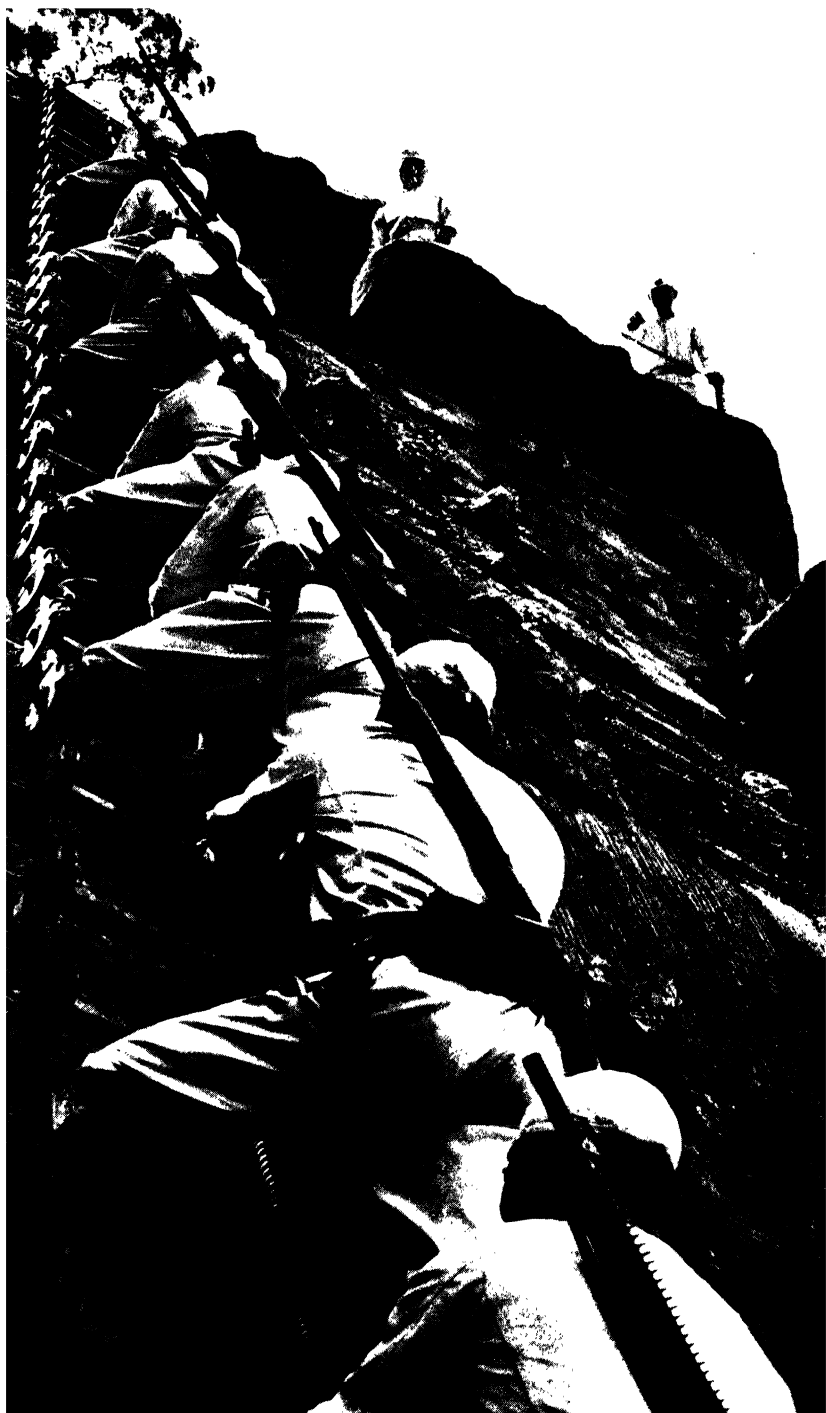
The friend turned to the witnesses with a bow and announced that judgment had been passed on the man and all the male members of his family.

It was learned afterwards that his wife had cut her throat at the same time at home, first binding her legs together with silk, for the Japanese women's bearing is noble even in death.

Such was the power of the feudal lords in the days of Bushido, and every Samurai wielded the same influence in his family; the good of the whole had always to come before the private good, and if no healthy children were born to the mother, others were adopted. The head of the family also had his responsibilities, and even his most distant relations could come to him in distress with the certainty of receiving food and shelter.

The Emperor was at that time only spiritual head of the Empire. Without military power, he was dependent in material matters on the generosity of the Shoguns, the administrators of the Empire, for the feudal lords had to pay tribute to the ruling Shogun and not to the Emperor.

The Tokugawa Shogun dynasty closed the empire for 265 years to the world and during that time Bushido grew into the strict ethical system which still held the







country in its power when foreigners rediscovered the country in the middle of the nineteenth century.

The strict observance of this moral code which has grown out of the rocky soil prepared the country to meet the outside world and laid the foundations of modern Japan. Instead of being colonised by the Western powers, the Japanese people rallied round their Imperial house which was then 2,500 years old. The feudal lords gave up their lands to the Emperor for redistribution, and in a few years a modern state grew out of this feudally-governed agrarian country, the people surviving the revolution with amazing ease.

And Bushido is still the driving force of the new nation. The face of the feudal knight is still concealed by the smiling mask of the modern Japanese, and the Samurai spirit is everywhere.

The duty of the individual to society, as opposed to the Anglo-Saxon principle of basing society on the rights of the individual, is a relic of these feudal times, and continues to rule the Japanese character.

The unemployed of the town can always return to their relations in the country, and thanks to this family bond young unemployed are unknown. And the idea of the family is not restricted to the family alone, but is found in the shops, theatres and even the telephone exchanges where the operators sleep and work, as well as in the factories. Foreign competition has to cope with the family system in every branch of Japanese industry.

"Picture brides" have to leave their homes in the same spirit to marry settlers in foreign lands, who have chosen them by photograph. The Japanese woman is, in fact, not only the feudally submissive servant of the man, but also the servant of the State. There are

already some women doctors, lawyers, and pilots, but in fact they are still pioneers, for the emancipation of Japanese women is not far advanced, and they have to serve humbly without equal rights.

Trade as well as the home is supported by the Japanese women, for there are more women than men working in the factories, and at home they have to serve first as daughters, then as wives and in their old age they must wait hand and foot on their eldest sons. As wives their only thoughts are for their children's education, the maintenance of tradition, and unity in the family, and these duties can be more successfully observed if they deny themselves the rights of the modern woman. Family loyalty is of the first importance to a nation which must expand, and this feudal trait may be a vital factor in the years to come.

The ethics of the cherry blossom still remain behind Japan and hara-kiri is still the guiding moral light. Death is less feared in Japan than anywhere else, and the Japanese are careful to choose romantic settings such as volcanoes and waterfalls, for committing suicide, which they call refined "self-destruction."

Four hundred deaths occurred in the volcano Miharayama in one year, and lately the War Office officially announced the hara-kiri of a distinguished officer who had happened to be absent from his post when a general was assassinated.

Earthquakes are the acid test of Bushido, and Japan has proved that she can survive these most terrible catastrophes. Earthquakes, typhoons, and eruptions, not great battles, are the milestones in Japanese history.

The calm with which Japan lives through typhoons points to them being the nation which could survive

sanctions better than any other country. I was in Osaka when one occurred. A tornado, blowing at 135 miles an hour, destroyed within forty minutes, 2,000 lives, 20,000 houses and 161 schools; 170,000 more houses were damaged and electric pylons were blown like chaff before the wind. Roofs were ripped off, fishing boats were swept off the sea on to the streets, and the people were buried under the wreckage.

An unearthly quiet followed the storm, and Osaka looked like a cemetery, but in a few hours the three million survivors took up a stand against death and destruction. "Help people first," was their cry, and nobody dared to save his property before the wounded had been tended and the dead had been buried. Cavalry rode through the streets; the horses' hoofs rang out on the asphalt and trumpets sounded. The uniforms and the music were to dispel nervousness. At night students carrying petroleum lamps led the foot passengers by the hand. Thousands slept without protection that night. The army was on guard against looters. No one complained.

The following day, school roll-calls were held among the ruins. The children lined up in uniform, hands folded in prayer. Sometimes as many as eighty per cent. of their numbers were absent. I heard stories of heroic teachers who died saving the children by lying on top of them when the buildings fell in.

On the second day there was still neither water nor light, and the patient housewives had to wait with pails on their doorsteps for the fire brigade, who supplied them with sufficient for cooking. What was left over from cooking was used for the daily bath, which they could not forgo even during these terrible days. Schools went on in the open air, and while one class

worked, another would be tearing down the ruins of the building. Order grew out of the chaos every hour, and the dead children were burned in open places.

Newspaper vans flying red flags tore through the streets distributing blankets, clothes and food. One paper presented the Emperor with thirty photographs and a film of the disaster. The Press published prohibitions to the builders and money-lenders against profiteering, and the army and navy gave up their reserve food supplies, the temples their rice. Everyone was completely self-controlled.

On the fifth day there was already time for ceremonies. A photograph was published in the papers of a Court Chamberlain standing under a canopy. The high officials of the province, dressed in frock coats, bowed before him, and the governor of Osaka was proclaiming the people's thanks for the Emperor's sympathy:

"Your humble subjects have been most graciously honoured by the visit of the Chamberlain whom your Majesty has sent to the scene of the typhoon. Your humble subjects are anxious to rebuild their town with all possible speed in order to serve an atom of your Majesty's will."

On the sixth day there was light and water. The tramway ran again and the schools were moved into the temples until new buildings were ready. The yen fell on the money markets, for it was obvious that with five-hundred idle factories Japan had been severely hit. Yet no one outside knew how serious the damage was, for there was no talk; their building went on and the typhoon was never mentioned. I heard no one complain or weep during all these days.

These are the powers of endurance with which Japan confronts the world.

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### THE LIVING GOD

THE higher the rise of a nation the greater the storm it has to ride. When the country was opened to the world, the people looked to the throne. Also to-day the Emperor is undoubtedly the magnetic centre of the Japanese people. The *Tenno* of Japan, the son of Heaven, can hardly be described simply as monarch, for he is Ancestral High Priest of the Shinto cult, the traditional priest of his race, a divine being and the representative of God in Japanese islands; for the European Roman Catholic he is Pope, King and St. George combined in his person. The Emperor is the Ara-Hito-Kami, the temporal living God.

On the first, eleventh and twenty-first days of each month, Emperor Hirohito, who is the 124th in the unbroken dynasty of the Sun Goddess, visits the shrines in his Imperial Palace garden, dedicated to his ancestors who have become gods, and with whom he holds spiritual communion. At the beginning of the ceremony all traces of selfishness and falseness have to be removed from his thoughts so that his mind may enter the realm of the ethereal heights, as pure as the reflection of a mirror.

As soon as his soul has been freed of things material, the heavenly will of the gods can give him new strength and fill him with love and goodwill. This religious ceremony symbolises Japanese life which is, without metaphysics, unthinkable.

The Emperor Hirohito is not the passive monarch he is popularly supposed to be abroad. He is perhaps the most active ruler in the world, and although he bears no responsibility for the actual direction of the country, he places himself from morning to night at the service of his people in the true Japanese spirit of self-sacrifice.

Apart from the religious ceremonies that he holds as traditional high priest, the Emperor has to sanction state decrees, and ministers and service officers can always consult him. He grants personal audiences to more than two thousand diplomats and high officials annually, and in addition to this routine work the thirty-five year old Emperor attends lectures on economics, law, literature and art; he inspects factories, especially chemical works, to keep in touch with the latest developments; he is a student of biology; and he has time for riding and golf.

The Emperor's omnipresence is felt by the people; it gives them direct contact with the supernatural, and they are lifted up above the material world. When I discussed the Emperor with some officers their voices dropped at the mention of his name, and they uttered it as priests pray to God. When I was travelling through Manchuria I passed a group of Japanese officers who were bowing in the direction of the Imperial Palace in Tokyo and reading out an Imperial decree.

All parties, whether they are conservative or socialist, have the same respect for the Emperor. For them, too, he is a supernatural being whose godliness is apparent. Their love for him is the same as their love for their country and their ancestors, and the

omnipotence of the representative of their god makes the dictatorship of any other man impossible.

One day a page in a Tokyo hotel handed me a large white envelope. It contained a white card printed in Japanese and ornamented with the sixteen-leaved chrysanthemum which is the crest of the Sun Emperor. The boy and the hotel manager bowed as the man translated:

"You are invited in the name of the Emperor and Empress to attend the chrysanthemum party which will take place on — 8th at twelve o'clock.

*Minister of the Imperial Household."*

By half-past eleven on the day of the reception, there were no more taxis to be had, and every car in the streets had a paper chrysanthemum pasted on the windscreen. Lackeys in European uniform stood at the entrance of the huge Japanese garden through which paths twisted and intersected. Eight thousand guests walked along a special route and servants stood at every junction as if to prevent the visitors from taking a short cut. Army and naval officers were in full dress uniform, and ministers in frock-coats and top-hats, but their wives all wore black ceremonial kimonos and broad sashes worked with silver chrysanthemums. The tall attachés and diplomats of the foreign embassies rose high above the Japanese, and the bright costumes of the Manchukuoan Chinese added colour to the crowd.

We eventually arrived at some pavilions of bamboo where the masterpieces of the Emperor's garden were exhibited. The Japanese were not content to look at the flowers from a distance, they had to scrutinise



them, and taking notebooks from their gala clothes, they wrote the particulars of the luxuriant blooms which towered up in all shapes and shades of coffee-brown, salmon-pink, brilliant-white, yellow-white, green-white and white-pink.

Tea was served on a lawn and a Marine band played. Punctually at one-thirty, loud speakers asked the visitors to go to another part of the garden where twelve long lines of tables were laid. We sat down, but no one touched the refreshments. All eyes were directed towards a broad passage-way which stretched up, roped off on both sides, to a pavilion decorated with white silk and the Imperial crest. Excitement reached its peak when loud speakers announced the arrival of the Princes of the Blood.

At two o'clock we heard that the Emperor and Empress had left the palace and the guests lined up on either side of the passage way, the women in their black kimonos coloured with their gay belts, behind them the men standing five deep.

When the strains of the national anthem were heard in the distance conversation ceased, and every gaze was directed to the Chrysanthemum pavilions where the Emperor was expected. There was a breathless silence when he appeared. He was dressed in a plain khaki uniform and held his head high as he walked briskly down the lane of people, bowing quietly as he passed. The young Empress in a pink silk European dress followed smiling three paces behind him, and after her came the princes and princesses of the royal blood, all dressed in European clothes.

When they had reached the pavilion and sat down, we returned to our tables but no one began to eat or

drink. Little packets of biscuits tied with pink ribbon lay unopened before every guest, and it was some time before the meal began. Gradually the conversation became lively again, but before long the Emperor and his suite stood up and we followed their example, the national anthem was played again and we could see the court bowing as the Emperor drove away in a red limousine, followed by a suite of red cars. The garden party was over.

## CHAPTER XXXIV

### THE OFFICERS' DREAM

THE epoch of adopting Western culture is over. Even the phase of absorption is drawing to a close. Nowadays Japan is suffering the labours of a new epoch, the epoch of synthesis. Japan is on the point of creating a new world image, a new philosophy, which may be known as the *Showa Restoration*.

The great driving force behind the realisation of the *Showa Restoration* is the Japanese military. Its officers are the ancestral guardians of their ancient morality, *Bushido*.

In contrast to the armies of other countries, the majority of the Japanese officers are not conservative but revolutionary. In their hearts the European ideal of man's rights is united with the Asiatic *Bushido*. The synthesis is the longing for the socialist family state—Imperial socialism. The fulfilment of this desire, that is to say the possibility of fulfilment, is made possible by their past history.

Two generations ago the powerful land-owning classes placed their property in the Emperor's hands at the threat of foreign danger; they changed their independence for vassaldom. This was the *Meiji Restoration*. But now Japan is in her eleventh year of *Showa* the eleventh year of the reign of the Emperor Hirohito, which is known as the *Showa Epoch*. Now the officers think that the modern counterpart of the land-owning classes, the great capitalists, should place

their property in the hands of the Emperor, who is divine and above all men. Japan should become the ideal family state under the divine Imperial father.

The liberals of Japanese trade and industry, the liberals of Japanese intellectual life, have until now in the carefree and sublime way of all liberals, viewed the threat to their social system airily. "The officers are political dreamers," they say. "The army has no conception of the national economic structure, they have no programme. . . ."

But in the dreamers' camp the atmosphere is not so carefree. Eighty per cent of the army is recruited from the peasant classes, and when the soldiers return on leave from the battlefields of Manchuria where they have spilled their blood, they see that their parents are enduring famine and are eating tree bark, and their sisters, even in the year 1936, are still being sold to the brothel. The officers, on the other hand, see the principles of *Bushido* being ground in the dust by former *Samurais*. The most incredible scandals whirl even Cabinet Ministers into their eddies as happened when Admiral Saito's cabinet fell in 1934. And all this when, not so far off, in Siberia, a Soviet Russian economic system could unchain a war between night and day! In the army's eyes, an economic system which is state controlled and led, is the only bulwark against this threat to their country. This fear is the tinder for the spark of their fanatical desire to get the reins of the state in their hands, and it results in a serious explosion every now and again.

The catchword of the *Showa* Restoration is preached to the men in this excited mood. The younger officers who have grown up amid the nation's difficulties, dream of this restoration as meaning the true socialist

family state at home, and the "liberation" of the Asiatic peoples from the foreign yoke, abroad. A section of the older officers on the other hand want monarchic socialism as a means to the end of Imperial triumph in the Pacific era, of the fulfilment of the divine mission by which Japan, as culture centre, shall satisfy the world by the spirit of the *Showa* Restoration. The old generals preach in the officers' colleges that it is their self-imposed, their divine mission, to give back the peoples of Asia their freedom, and undoubtedly a section of these older generals are to blame for the abortive revolts of their junior officers. But it is hardly credible that these clever tacticians do not know themselves that they are only preaching catchwords. I hardly think that they cannot know that the Koreans, for instance, whose country is now a Japanese colony, are certainly not happier than the millions of India, but much unhappier than the people of Hawaii.

The young officers are now encouraged and strengthened in their efforts, and they are inciting the people to re-adopt the dictates of the ancient and strict morality.

Hundreds of thousands of pamphlets are distributed nearly every month by the Imperial War Office among nearly all classes of the country. According to Imperial decree, the army is not allowed to take up politics, but they say that political pamphlets are in the interest of the national defence. Almost every paragraph of these pamphlets begins with the words "national defence." And in this way national defence can be connected with economics, social problems, the public spirit, military power. . . .

The writers of the pamphlets are shocked that the

majority of the people are in want, while only a minority can enjoy the pleasures of life. They are up in arms because the prices of agricultural products are unfair for the producers, because distribution is basically wrong, because there are debts which overburden the peasants, because manures are expensive. The young officers are up in arms against the League of Nations which only wants the exploiting nations to have their own interests protected and to impede the progress of Japan.

The writers of the pamphlets urge reform of the economic system on the basis of common prosperity for the country and townspeople. They urge reform of the whole social system on the code of the new spirit of self-denial. The nation should be based on economic patriotism. Individual undertakings may be encouraged, but they must not interfere with the state. National economics must be controlled by the army so that what the army needs can be supplied. These young officers demand that a new economic system should be built up, that the necessary means for national defence can be supplied without the nation's life being imperilled.

These pamphlets cause uproar in the political and economic circles. The Minister for War is attacked, but he disputes having any knowledge of the content of the pamphlets. "Did the war minister really know nothing about your last pamphlet?" I once asked one of the writers privately. "Do you think that a Japanese officer would distribute such leaflets in the name of the entire army by the hundred thousand without the permission of his senior?" was the reply. Hayashi was still Minister for War at that time. After a few days of stubborn silence the war minister

did not deny any more that the pamphlets did not characterise the spirit of the whole army. Nor did he deny that his officers were in fact "studying" the present economic system, nor that they were poring over books and calculating and calculating. But he did not necessarily expect, remarked Hayashi, that these theoretical studies would be translated into deeds. And Hayashi is not considered a demagogue. He is looked upon as a man of spotless honour and belongs to the conservative wing.

It is impossible to argue about material or economic matters with the officers. When an officer can think of no other argument, he shouts out, "But we feel, we are convinced that we are acting in the right way and only in the right way." Their fanaticism is sincerely striving after the truth, and it is absolutely overpowering. And it is overpowering the masses more and more.

Apart from the officially representative group which is recruited principally from the Press department of the War Ministry, there are countless private and secret organisations fighting for the same ideals. But they employ different methods.

These "illegal" groups have started action on a big scale since the 16th May, 1932. Young officers and cadets murdered the Prime Minister on that day. On the eve of the bloody day they published the following manifesto in the "name of the young officers of the army and the navy":

"Japanese people! In politics, diplomacy, national education, economics, the spirit of the people—where is the honour of our divine Japan? Japan suffers to-day because political parties are involved in intrigues for political power and party interests.

Japan suffers because the plutocracies who are bound up with these evils are sucking the people's blood and sweat, and because officialdom is supporting them, the oppression is growing from day to day. Japan is suffering because their foreign policy is spineless, because national education is backward, because ideals have been forgotten. . . .

"Japan is to-day on the edge of an abyss. If reforms are not brought into force, she will fail. People! Arise and arm! Direct action is the only possibility for salvation. There is no other way.

"People! In the name of the Emperor, kill the guilty authorities of the Imperial court! Kill the plutocrats! Root out the present political parties who are only the enemies of the people! Punish the misusers of power and root out the traitorous privileged sections!

"Peasants, workers, all people of Japan, defend your fatherland! Return under the ægis of your Emperor! Build up the new state in this spirit only. Elect only those officials who are soaked in the national spirit, build up a new and glorious Japan!

"People! Remember this. First of all: demolish! Demolish the crazy political parties of the present time! Before the rebuilding can begin, the old must be razed to the ground. We will bear the banner of the *Showa* Restoration throughout the land.

"We shall not confuse ourselves with the existing left and right organisations. . . . Victory or fall. Japan does not depend on what we, a small advance guard of the nation achieve. She depends on your actions, on the actions of her people, who are with us in spirit. Awake! Arise and let us create a new, a true Japan!"

The long drawn-out trials followed long after the bloody revolt, and the catchword of the prisoners was the *Showa* Restoration! Hundreds upon hundreds sent amputated fingers to the judges as a sign of their sympathy with the prisoners. There were daily reports



of *hara-kiris* which had been committed out of sympathy for the divine ideal of *Showa*. None of the prisoners was condemned to death. A few were sentenced to prison, but the majority were sent to the Manchurian front.

The generals remained in the background, but the young cadets became richer by one disappointment. They, however, advanced the army's cause a few steps further; an admiral had to be made Prime Minister and the army estimates were, under pressure of public opinion, increased.

It is very difficult to say which general leads in which direction. While, for example, part of the Press extolled General Ugaki as a precursor of socialist revolution, another section of the rebels blamed him for being a conservative. The position of General Araki, who is very popular among the young officers, is also unclear. But it must always be remembered that it is not the individual personalities who are the decisive factors in Japan.

Between 1932 and 1936 the growing influence of the army was, like other similar forces all over the world, underrated. It was also not expected that the statesmen who had only influenced the people's temper would win a triumph over men concerned with the abstract, bare, future who would clear up these crises only economically.

Will the army's dream materialise?

The elections of 1936 ended with a surprise victory for the liberal *Minseito* party, even the social democrats achieved some not insignificant success, but the bourgeois *Seyukai* party which was supported by the army suffered defeat. Tokyo breathed again. Trade and industry felt confident that so long as Japan was not threatened by the army, fulfilment of the *Showa*

Restoration need not be feared. Japan now experienced the greatest triumphs of the capitalist system, which in the rest of the world was struggling for existence. But the moment—and the leaders of Japanese economic system realised this—the present capitalist system falls into a crisis, the officers' dream will materialise. And Japan's great advantage over the rest of the world lies in the fact that she could, thanks to *Bushido*, renounce the blessings of capitalism from one day to another.

But at the same time the officers' dream can within a short time lose what chances it has. That would be when the divine Emperor would give them a definite "no." The *Showa* Restoration can only be an evolution, for every revolution in Japan must cry a halt before the walls of the Imperial palace.

The events of February, 1936, are a classic example of this.

The young officers who had seen their influence over the people shrinking, took action. The bloody consequences which made the world hold its breath for three days, became a further milestone in the history of *Showa*. This time the strife was not for the extermination of the liberal leaders of the civilian classes, but against those high officers entrusted with important governmental positions who had compromised with the Liberals. Admiral Saito, the Lord Privy Seal, was their most prominent victim. The assassination of a finance genius, the old Minister Takahashi, placed Japanese economics once again before the alternative of status quo, or complete change. One thing is certain; the Japanese economic system will have to pay much more attention from now on to the wishes of the army.

This unique overthrow of a revolt gave the world a shining example of the Japanese make-up. Thousands mutinied. They occupied the governmental buildings. It would have been child's play for the rest of the army to clean up the rebels, but from the side of the government no shot was fired, no angry word spoken. The official war ministry *communiqués* did not veil their sympathy with the actionaries' cause, and the old generals even treated with them. The integrity of their intentions, their loyalty to the Emperor, were not questioned for a minute. But the generals submitted the word of the Emperor to the young officers: The Emperor does not approve of the revolt. The leading officers took the consequences, and shot themselves. But their men were able to return to their barracks without further ado.

On the same day four officers who had had nothing to do with the rebels, put on white clothes, wrote touching letters of farewell in black ink to their friends, and ended their lives by *hara-kiri* in mourning for the events which had made a blot on the record of the Imperial army.

In the end there were no surprises. The young officers were the poorer by one disappointment, the same old generals the richer by a triumph, for the appointment of Hirota as Prime Minister who was moderate in his home policy, but also had that same wish which was felt by the young and the old officers, namely Japan's right to lead Asia.

The boiling Japanese soul is again in need of relief from tension. Trouble at home would have spelled suicide so the say was given to the restless Japanese Kwantung army. The time is close at hand when the Japanese soldiers will drive over the Asiatic mainland and change the map again.

So long as the seventy million Japanese are not capable of making an example to the world of brotherliness and equality on account of the synthesis of their different ideals and virtues, the formulation of General Araki, "Up till now Japan has let herself be led by the West. Now the time has come when Japan will lead the West!" will remain an unfulfilled Japanese dream.

The Liberals certainly won the 1936 elections. When the new Cabinet sat, only three weeks after, the new prime minister, Hirota, had to adapt himself to the wishes of the army, against his will. He could not appoint all his Liberal friends to posts in his Cabinet. The Emperor's word of command had, however, tremendous effect. The *Showa* cause next became unpopular; the generals who were popular among the younger officers were relieved of the command, and the army was put in hands of the remaining generals who were of moderate views. But even these "moderate" generals represent the faction who believe that life in the Japanese state belongs to the man in uniform.

I received a letter from a Japanese student in Tokyo in the Summer of 1936, and it recalled to me the tone obtaining in the Japanese middle class to-day:

" . . . I think that you Europeans must be of a very pessimistic turn of mind, for you evidently think now that the Japanese government will be more than ever influenced by the officers. As a matter of fact even we thought that after the bloody events. But our fears were dispersed by the refreshing news that Koki Hirota had been appointed Prime Minister. I feel sure that his policy will be peace abroad and moderation at home. Now, after these regrettable happenings

which only damaged our relations with foreign powers, Japan will have to regain the confidence of the world by a show of contentment at home. It is, of course, only natural that his Imperial Majesty should have put Koki Hirota at the head of the government.

"But I must also tell you that the military circles have again adopted a culpable attitude. Although they alone were responsible for the seditious incident, they are not putting the blame on the statesmen, and are themselves pretending to be prisoners of a new nationalism. Their intentions are good, but their means are despicable and ill-prepared. Yet they are raising their voices and impeding any cabinet formation which does not suit them. And they have forced their will on the Prime Minister, and Hirota has had to overlook some of the Liberals. The splendid idea of forming a strong national cabinet under Hirota has now been mutilated. The fate of this apparently middle-class cabinet under the sway of the army, is our greatest worry. . . ."

The young officers died for the ideal of the socialist Imperial family state, but to-day the old generals are in command again. Will the "disappointed" sections be able to find among themselves a common bond? The dreamy but bold young officers, and the Liberals? The Liberals are faced with the duty of ensuring that the word "Liberalist" does not become a term of abuse as it has in some European states. Will they work together? Is it possible, for example, for a convinced Central European Fascist and a confirmed socialist to share ideals? Hardly, but all Japanese, and they alone, have a common symbol, a common god, a common authority, a common family head, in the personality of the Emperor.











